The rise and fall of the Bakwena dynasty of south-central Botswana, 1820-1940.

(Volumes I and II)

Ramsay, Frederick Jeffress, Jr., Ph.D.
Boston Univenity, 1991

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dissertation

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE BAKWENA DYNASTY OF SOUTH-CENTRAL BOTSWANA, 1820-1940.

Volume I of II

by

FREDERICK JEFFRESS RAMSAY, Jr.

B.A., University of Pennsylvania, 1980
M.A., Boston University, 1982

Submitted in partial fullfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

1991

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1990

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THE RISE AND FALL OF THE BAKWENA DYNASTY OF SOUTH-CENTRAL BOTSWANA, 1820-1940.

(Order no.)

Frederick Jeffress Ramsay, Jr.

Boston University Graduate School, 1991

Major Professor: Sara S. Berry, Professor of Economics and History.

ABSTRACT

This dissertion examines the growth of an African state in the nineteenth century and its subsequent incorporation into the Bechuanaland Protectorate and the regional economy of southern Africa. It begins by considering the transformation of the BaKwena monarchical state from a small, disunited community into a regional power, Kweneng, during the reign of Sechele I (c.1833-92.) Under him Kweneng emerged as a refuge and center of resistance to Boer aggression, culminating in the BaTswana-Boer War of 1852-53. Despite his successful leadership in this conflict Sechele's kingdom subsequently experienced a relative decline prior to its inclusion into the Bechuanaland Protectorate. During the first decade of British overule he and his successor Sebele I (1892-1911) sought to preserve their sovereignty in face of the British South Africa Company's desire to take over the Protectorate. The failure of the Jameson raid ended this particular threat but was accompanied by the onset of prolonged ecological crisis and the initial consolidation of colonialism which undermined the material basis of the local political-economy. By the first decade of the twentieth century the Kweneng was becoming a labor reserve. Despite this growing economic dependence Sebele's administration was able to spearhead the campaign which prevented the inclusion of the Protectorate into the

nascent Union of South Africa. The success he and his two successors, Sechele II (1911-18) and Sebele II (1918-31), occasionally enjoyed in winning concessions from the imperial power did not prevent the growth of devisive internal opposition to them. All three were plagued by conflict with their "leading headmen" who generally identified themselves with the semi-established Congregational church and colonial state. For their part the monarchs cultivated the support of commoners by stressing the inclusive nature of their governing council and championing controversial pre-Christian practices, most notably initiation. By the 1920's Sebele II became the patron of "Neo-Traditional" worldview which challenged not only the pretensions of the local Christian elite but also elements of white domination. His resulting banishment by the British ended the political autonomy of Kweneng and its monarchy.

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GLOSSARY

NB: This is simply a guide to some of the SeTswana (q.v.) words as they are used in the text. It is not meant to be a comprehensive, definative exposition of their meanings. The text itself provides a broader context for understanding many of the terms.

Ba- A prefix often used to denote two or more people (e.g. BaTswana)

Basimane ba Kgosi- Literally "Boys of the Kgosi," often used to refer to a body of senior councilors of the Kgosi (q.v.) of non-royal descent.

Bo- A prefix often used to denote an area (e.g. Botswana) or an institution (bogosi)

bogadi- The institution of bridewealth (lobola) in which cattle and/or other property is usually given by the family of the groom to the family of the bride to legitimize a marriage.

bogosi- The institution of royal government. The office occupied by a Kgosi (q.v.) and the institutional perogatives attached to the office. Commonly translated as chieftainship, kingship, or kingdom.

bogwera- The institution and process of male initiation into adulthood.

bojale- The institution and process of female initiation into adulthood.

bojalwa- Sorghum beer.

bolata- The institution of hereditary servitude.

diKgosi- Plural form of Kgosi (q.v.)

Kgosana, plr. diKgosana- A dimunitive of Kgosi. Can be used as a general title of respect as well as to refer specifically to males descended patrilineally from a Kgosi (q.v.)

Kgosi- "King." The highest executive, judicial, and legislative authority in a SeTswana (q.v.) polity, morafe (q.v.) The head of a lineage recognized as senior by all members of a morafe. The eldest son of the ranking wife of a deceased Kgosi or deceased Kgosi apparent. A title and form of address used with reference to the person who holds the office of Kgosi or

Regent (Motshwareledi.) Kgosi e Kgolo- "Paramount Kgosi." SeSotho equivalent- Khosi SeKgalagadi- Kgoshi.

kgotla- The primary unit in the socio-political structure of SeTswana (q.v.) societies. The place were public meetings are held and/or judicial cases are heard for people falling under the authority of said court and assembly. NB. forms le/makgotla and dikgotla not used in text. "The Kgotla" refers to the central kgotla of the Kgosi.

kgadi- A liquor distilled from honey, sorghum and/or other ingredients.

impi- An Nguni equivalent of mophato (q.v.)

letsholo- A large hunt and/or secrete meeting in the veld among armed men in which contentious matters can be discussed and acted upon.

mafisa- Cattle loaned to individuals for their use in return for proper care and offspring.

matimela- Stray stock impounded by a Kgosi and his representatives, to be claimed by owners or used for public purposes.

Mo- A prefix often denoting a single person (e.g. MoTswana.)

Mohumagadi- A title of respect used to refer to a senior woman in a morafe (q.v.), such as a Kgosi's wife. Mohumagadi a Mogolo- The senior wife, "Queen," of a Kgosi.

mophato (plr. mephato)- an age-regiment made up of a group of men or women initiated together who are expected to assist the morafe in performing public tasks, projects, and police actions. Male mephato constitute the militia of a morafe (q.v.)

morafe- A SeTswana (q.v.) polity. The people ruled by a Kgosi (q.v.) NB: In the past the term was equivelent to sechaba, which in recent times often denotes "nation" while morafe is often translated as "tribe."

moruti- A teacher, particularly a religious teacher. Also used for a Reverend or minister.

Nkosi- Nguni equivalent of Kgosi.

SeTswana- (see Tswana)

"Sons of Kgabo"- Used in text to refer to those BaKwena who claim patrilineal descent from Kgabo, the first Kgosi (q.v.) of the BaKwena bagaKgabo morafe (q.v.) Such individuals are often referred to as diKgosana.

thuto- Education. Book-learning, the system of education introduced by missionaries.

Tswana, Ba, Mo, Se,- BaTswana: The people who speak SeTswana language and conform to SeTswana norms; also any citizen of the Republic of Botswana. MoTswana: A person of SeTswana or citizen of Botswana. SeTswana : the language spoken by BaTswana and an adjective refering to their culture.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC(S)	Assistant Commissioner South
ARC	Assistant Resident Commissioner
ARM	Assistant Resident Magistrate
BBP	Bechuanaland Border Police
BNA	Botswana National Archives (see bibliography)
BP	Bechuanaland Protectorate
BPP	British Parliamentry Papers
BSAC	British South Africa Company
BTC	Bakwena Tribal Council
CO	Colonial Office
CPP	Cape Parliamentry Papers
DC	District Commissioner
DRC	Dutch Reformed Church (see bibliography)
GS	Government Secretary (to the Resident Commissioner)
HC	High Commissioner
HMG	Her/His Majesty's Government
IS	Imperial Secretary (to the High Commissioner)
LMS	London Missionary Society (see also bibliography)
Mol	Molepolole (in document citations)
NAC	Native Advisory Council
ORT	Orange River Territory
PP	Private Papers (see bibliography)
PRO	Public Records Office (see bibliography)
PSA	Pretoria State Archives (see bibliography)

SPG Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (Anglican)

RC Resident Commissioner

RM Resident Magistrate

S.A. Arg. Tvl. *Suid-Afrikaanse Argiefstukke, Transvaal* (see bibliography)

SAR South African Republic

SOC Sebele Out Correspondence (see bibliography)

SS Secretary of State for the Colonies

WCW/SO Willoughby Papers at Shelly Oak (see bibliography)

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines the emergence of Kweneng, the BaKwena state in south-central Botswana, and its subsequent incorporation into Britain's Bechuanaland Protectorate and the regional economy of southern Africa. To trace this process the study has as its cynosure the rise and fall of Kweneng's ruling Sechele dynasty from c.1820 to 1940. Such a focus allows for an examination of how royal politics among the BaKwena not only influenced the course of events within their polity, but also contributed to the emergence of Botswana as a nation. The principal motivating force for the rise of this broader identity was the need to resist white racial hegemony. During the period of this study, this resistance was organized through the political structures of Kweneng and neighboring, BaTswana dominated, states. In this respect, the history of the BaKwena monarchy is notable for the past role played by members of the Sechele dynasty in Botswana's continuing struggle to balance a desire for local sovereignty with the evolving reality of southern Africa's racially stratified inter-dependence.

The study begins by considering the transformation of the BaKwena *morafe* or polity from a small, disunited, community into a regional power during the reign of Sechele I (c.1833-92.) Under his leadership Kweneng emerged as a refuge and center of resistence to Boer aggression. In the resulting BaTswana-Boer War of 1852-53 various BaTswana *merafe* (plr.) coelesced around the BaKwena monarch to check Boer invaders. The success of this Pan-BaTswana alliance was the foundation stone on which the modern Botswana nation-state has been built.

The subsequent history of the BaKwena royalty allows for the further exploration of nationally important historical developments. These include the Civil Wars that gripped

eastern Botswana during the 1870's, the struggle by BaTswana polities to preserve their internal sovereignty in the face of the British South Africa Company's efforts to take their land during the first decade of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and the long campaign to keep the Protectorate out of the Union of South Africa from 1908. The Civil Wars reduced the mid-nineteenth century preminence of the BaKwena monarchy within Botswana, while leaving most of the territory divided between five states: Gammangwato, Gangwaketse, Gatawana (Ngamiland), Kgatleng, and Kweneng. Subsequent events, during the colonial period, tended to promote a greater sense of unity among the people of the Protectorate as a whole. This process was facilitated by the continued strength of, and cooperation between, the five principal pre-colonial monarchies. The study of Kweneng and its monarchy is thus neither more nor less than an examination of a piece of a larger national and regional puzzle.

Much of this study is concerned with understanding the dynamic nature of BaTswana politics during the colonial period. Of particular interest is the relationship between "traditional," that is indigenous, political authority within the Native Reserves and the colonial state. The institutional link between these two political cultures was *bogosi*, the royal office that serves as the ultimate repository of terrestrial authority within a *morafe*. The individual who occupies the office of *bogosi* is a kgosi in SeTswana (this latter term denoting both the language and culture of the BaTswana peoples.) Under the British the Kgosi of the BaKwena was integrated into the colonial hierarchy, holding the additional post of "Chief." The local ambiguities that arose from this combination of responsibilities were of central importance in shaping the particular character of the Protectorate's political culture.

As diKgosi (plr.) and Chiefs the BaKwena rulers, along with their peers, occupied an intermediary position throughout most of the colonial period that set them apart from the great majority of chieftaincies then found in southern Africa's archipelago of Native Reserves. Because of this they were better able to exploit the available political margins of their colonially marginalized positions in order to preserve a significant degree of autonomy for their polities. This resulted in the continued local regulation of material and social resources through the maintenance of SeTswana law and custom. For this reason the preservation of *bogosi* within Kweneng was for many years an issue of popular, and not simply chiefly, concern.

In this study the terms "Kgosi" and "Chief" are conceptually segregated. Taken together, the two titles integrated sometimes conflicting interests and responsibilities. On the one hand the Kgosi the BaKwena *morafe* sat at the apex of a dynamic social order that was regulated from within the kgotla or public fora, which were both loci of participatory decision making and, collectively, an institutional framework for the public legitimization of royal authority.[1] Ideally the participatory nature of kgotla politics has been enshrined in the right of all adult males (and more recently females) within a *morafe* to take part in their

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1. The proper plural forms of kgotla, depending on context and dialect, are either *makgotla* or *dikgotla*, but for consistency and to avoid confusion I will simply refer to kgotla.

proceedings.[2] The Chief of the BaKwena Tribe, on the other hand, was the final link in a military-like chain of command emanating from London whose legal basis (the British Parliament's Foreign Jurisdictions Act), vested absolute authority with the Imperial Crown and its agents. The resulting intermediary position occupied by *bogosi* thus gives the institution a heuristic value for exploring the manner in which colonialism in Botswana not only transformed but was itself transformed by the local political environment.

The Protectorate's administrative system, prior to the Second World War, has often been described as having been one of "parallel" indirect rule. This term has been used to suggest that the Native Administrations within the Reserves enjoyed a degree of judicial and fiduciary autonomy that allowed them to operate "parallel" to other governing elements of the colonial state. Given that the institution of *bogosi* was, in fact, subordinated within the administrative framework, "parallel rule" has always been something of a myth. Inside the *merafe* this myth was promoted through the popular fiction that the BaTswana were under the protection of "Mma mosadinyana," Empress Victoria, as a result of the 1895 London mission of diKgosi Bathoen I, Khama III, and Sebele I.[3]

---

2. In this respect modern politicians, like the diKgosi whose leadership they superseded, continue to test public opinion and legitimize their authority through the kgotla. But while the Kgotla is often spoken of as the foundation of Botswana's democracy the institution (and customary law which is adjudicated within it) cannot be isolated from *bogosi* without completely altering its nature (see the discussion of SeTswana political structure below.) For shift from *bogosi* to multi-party politics in Botswana see A. Murry, H. Nengwekhulu, and J. Ramsay "The Formation of Politcal Parties," in F. Morton and J. Ramsay (edits.) *Birth of Botswana: A History of the Bechuanaland Protectorate from 1910 to 1966.* (Longman Botswana, Gaborone 1987), pp. 172-186.

3. *Mma mosadinyana*, which literally translates as "old" and/or "small woman," was idiomatically meant to convey respect for Her Majesty as a matriarch.

Although during their stay the three leaders were indeed told that they would continue to "rule their own peoples much as at present," in reality the relationship between their state structures and the colonial super-structure was in a constant state of evolution throughout the British occupation. The ability of the BaKwena to maintain a degree of local autonomy for themselves, in the context of their encapsulation into the racially stratified southern African economy, was, during the period of this study, due neither to imperial grace nor the chronology of Kweneng's economic decline. By maintaining their local legitimacy, while cooperating with other diKgosi, the BaKwena rulers continued to benefit from their modest leverage within the colonial administration, whose superstructure needed the cooperation of indigenous agents for the low cost administration of its vast, underdeveloped, Protectorate. This delicate relationship was predicated on the, by no means inevitable, preservation of Bechuanaland as a separate entity, which was thus free from the direct rule of white settlers.

The relationship between the diKgosi, their subjects, and the British was complex and often contradictory. Popular mobilization in support of *bogosi* was set against periodic challenges to alleged "chiefly autocracy" by internal, as well as external parties. On occasion various diKgosi were able to exploit their positions within the colonial hierarchy. as absolute authorities over their people in order to crush dissent with the instrumental backing of the state. Many colonial officials believed that control from above was best exercised through local potentates, for the divine right pretensions of Chieftaincy could confer popular, and sometimes more importantly legal, legitimacy to the authoritarian demands of imperialism. On other occasions these same officials supported, and often attempted to manipulate, opposition groups within the reserves. Indeed the often paradoxical relationship between indigenous authority and the

state could lead to occasions in which colonial agents were seemingly working at cross purposes.

The existence of domestic opposition raises the question of who benefited from *bogosi* and who wished to see it altered or abolished. This in turn raises further questions relating to the dispensation of power within and among local communities; an issue that has continued to be a source of some controversy among members and outside observers of SeTswana society.

The Structural Context

The dynamic nature of various African social orders has long been recognized by some observers. During the inter-World War years a number of anthropologists conducting research in the Native Reserves of southern Africa were at the forefront of those in their discipline seeking to move beyond the then prevailing synchronic constructions of the Functionalist school. Representative of this distinguished group is Isaac Schapera, who has justifiably been regarded as the father of Botswana social science. In his numerous writings, Schapera has illustrated the complex and non-static nature of SeTswana society during the 1930s and 1940s, while gradually coming to characterize its history as one of innovative response, rather than adaptation, to external forces of change.[4] He has implicitly attributed this innovative response to individual rather than group initiatives. Although he may not completely concur with John Comaroff's conclusion that persons define their kinship relations just as kinship relations define persons, Schapera has also long recognized the primacy of

4. See the contrast between Schapera's *Trible Innovators*, (Athlone Press, London 1970) and his forward in *The Political Annals of a Tswana Tribe* (University of Capetown monograph, 1942.)

politics over lineage in the sectoral organization of SeTswana societies.[5]

In his structural analysis of the SeTswana "tribal constitution" Schapera has been consistent in his appreciation that: "The administrative system of the Tswana is founded upon the principle of delegated responsibility."[6] Authority is seen as having been vertically delegated both towards and away from Kgosing, the Kgotla of the Kgosi, through a complex web of subordinate kgotla. This structure has been rationalized in terms of patriarchical principles. Ideally households come together as family clusters, which owe allegiance to kgotla presided over by the genealogically senior male. These kgotla are in turn linked to superior fora through an ever widening network of paternal lineage groupings terminating at Kgosing. At each level ultimate authority ideally rests with the the founder of the kgotla or his senior male descendent as determined by primogeniture. In cases of polygamy households are ranked (not necessarily based on their chronology of marriage), with sons of senior wives coming before junior ones. As with the Kgosi the heads of the subordinate kgotla are expected to exercise their jurisdiction in consultation with other members of the grouping. When conflict has arisen individuals have been free to appeal to more senior fora (which Schapera translates as "wards") as well as Kgosing. A notable feature of this contitutional framework is that it provides the Kgosi with no independent source coercive power.

---

5. John Comaroff "The Case for a General Ethnography: Southern Bantu Perspective" *African Studies* (Univ. of Witwatersrand) vol. 34, no. 2 (1975), 147-157. Schapera *The Ethnic Composition of Tswana Tribes* (London School of Economics monograph # 11, 1952.)

6. Schapera *A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, (Frank Cass, London 1938/1984) p. 53. Chapters 3-6 of the *Handbook* on the "Tribal Constitution" are deservedly considered the standard work on the subject.

Within the specific context of BaKwena politics the structural inter-relationships between various kgotla have been outlined by Benjamin van Niekerk and Gary Okihiro.[7] Their studies are consistent with Schapera's structuralist analysis of the devolved nature of political authority. Okihiro has placed the structural relationship of the *morafe's* kgotla in a historical context. Both he and, the otherwise ahistorical, Van Niekerk have, moreover, recognized that the modern BaKwena polity emerged during the nineteenth-century reign of Kgosi Sechele, whose statebuilding is detailed in the first two chapters of this study.

A number of studies have taken exception to aspects of Schapera's work. Robert Stevenson has questioned the assumption of the authochthonus nature of modern Botswana-based *merafe* by suggesting that colonial Gammangwato was to a large extent created, rather than incorporateded, by imperialist forces.[8] Although he overstates his case, while relying on limited data gained from secondary sources, the issue that Stevenson raised remains one of fundamental importance. While Stevenson errs in his virtual dismissal of Gammangwato's pre-colonial roots he nonetheless underscores the fact that indigenous authority within Botswana was part of an imperial system.

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7. Benjamin van Niekerk "Die administraione strukter van die Bakwena-stam van die Betsjoeanalandse Protektoraat," (M.A. thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1961) (an English translation by the author exists at BNA: BNB 1489.) Gary Okihiro "Hunters, Herders, Cultivators, and Traders: Interaction and Change in the Kgalagadi, Nineteenth Century," (Ph.D. thesis, U.C.L.A., 1976.)

8. Robert Stevenson *Population and Political Systems in Tropical Africa* (Columbia University Press, N.Y. 1968)(Chapter 4- "Low Density State II: The Ngwato," pp. 53-87) 1968.)

Between 1820 and 1940 the drama of socio-political restructuring within Kweneng has been acted out against a backdrop of longterm economic underdevelopment in which the territory was marginalized as a peripheral supplier of cheap labor for the southern African macro-economy.[9] It would be a mistake to characterize the overall process of underdevelopment within the Bechuanaland Protectorate as having been either uniform or simple. Rather it consisted of a series of transformations that had a differential impact on local communities. The ecological and human factors that contributed to the rise of migrant labor in Kweneng are discussed in chapter four, where it is argued that the territory's status as a labor reserve can be traced to the turn of this century. In 1935 this process had advanced to the point where Kgosi Kgari Sechele estimated that almost 40% of his Reserve's able-bodied adult males were absent at any given time, while in 1942-43 Schapera found that 49.9% of the BaKwena taxpayers were away.[10]

By the end of the colonial era overwhelming majority of BaKwena were unable to accumulate any wealth in return for the extraction of the surplus value of their labor. In 1965 out of an estimated 15,000 potential tax payers in Kweneng, 13,792 had annual incomes of less than 144 rand, a statistic that includes all of the estimated 5,000 miners as well as 6,551 individuals with little or no income.[11] On the other end

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9. Underdevelopment is understood here as a relationship of exploitation in which a society is unable to internally accumulate surplus.

10. BNA S. 387/5, statement by Kgosi Kgari Sechele. I. Schapera *Migrant Labour and Tribal Life*, (Oxford University Press, London 1947), p. 34: 13.6% were in the army and 36.3% were listed as "elsewhere."

11. BNA Uncatalogued DCMol file- CF/26 "Confidential File-Graduated Personal Tax." This file contains a numerical breakdown, by occupation, of eleven income categories.

of the scale only 371 had incomes of above 300 rand per annum, of which just 26 earned more than 960 rand.'[12]

There are many other measures for the colonial underdevelopment of Botswana as a whole. At independence there existed only five kilometers of paved road in the territory. Less than forty BaTswana had tertiary degrees, while the first government built Senior Secondary school was not established until 1965. The only significant industrial plant in the Protectorate was the, then small, abbatoir at Lobatse. To the generations that remember the, in most areas stormy, night when the Union Jack was finally hualed down, and the black and white in blue banner of Botswana raised, the years preceding independence are generally indentified with poverty and stagnation.

Within Kweneng the general pattern of colonial immiseration suggests that local politics was driven more by a breakdown of old class formations rather than the formation of new ones, beyond that of a large underclass of migrant laborers and their rural dependents. Prior to the 1930s the BaKwena diKgosi were, nonetheless, able to maintain their own material (income) autonomy from the colonial state. The wider significance of this is suggested by the fact that, for the same period, the Protectorate's Native Reserves have been collectively differentiated from other labor reserves by the leadership qualities of many of their diKgosi, who have been variously described as "tribal innovators," "modernists," and/or "neo-traditionalists."[13]

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12. The 26 individuals in the top category included: 9 hospital employees, 6 teachers, 4 in agriculture, 2 Tribal Administration employees (including the Chief), 2 cattlemen, 1 policeman, 1 postal employee, and 1 employee of the Native Recruitment Corportion.

13. Schapera *Tribal Innovators*. Fred Morton and Jeff Ramsay (edits.) *Birth of Botswana*, part one.

The roots of rural poverty in Kweneng can be traced to the land and labor policies imposed during the mid-nineteenth century by conquering Voortrekkers on the indigenous inhabitants of what is now the South African Highveld. The alienation of black African land, expropriation of black African property, and exploitation of black African labor formed the material, social and ideological basis for the Afrikaner dominated states which emerged in the interior of South Africa in the aftermath Great Trek. This new social order was itself to a large extent a reproduction of the earlier pattern of Cape slavery. After his 1877 visit to South Africa the English writer Anthony Trollope observed:

> "Looking out of a window in a quiet dreary little town in the Free State I saw opposite me two men engaged in plastering a wall. One was a Kafir and the other was probably a west coast Negro. Two or three passed by with loads on their shoulders. They were Bechuanas or Bastard Hottentots. I strolled out of the village to a country house where a Fingo was gardener and a Bushman working under him. Out in the street the two men who had driven the coach were loafing around it. They were Cape Boys as they are called, -a coloured people who came from St Helena and have white blood in their veins. I had dined lately and been waited upon by a Coolie. Away in the square I could see bales of wool being handled by three Basutos. A couple of Korannas were pretending to drive oxen through the street but were apparently going where the oxen led them. Then came another Hottentot with a yoke a and pair of buckets on his shoulders. I had little else to do and watched while I was there; -but I did not see a single white man at work. I heard their voices, - some Dutch, though chiefly English; but the voices were the voices of masters and not men. Then I walked round the place with the object of seeing, and nowhere could I find a white man working as a labourer. And yet the Orange Free State is supposed to be the one South African territory from which the black man has been expelled. The independent black man who owned the land has been expelled, -but the working black man has taken his place, allured by wages and diet."[4]

The Great Trek and subsequent formation of the South African Republic (Transvaal) and Orange Free State have, rightfully, long been treated as seminal events in both the "liberal" and nationalist wings of the white historiography of South Africa.[15] SeTswana historiography and historical traditions have also appreciated the significance of the *Maburu* (Boer) invasions. Curiously the consequences of the rise of Afrikanerdom in the interior have been neglected by that branch of white South African historiography recently referred to as the "revisionist" school. This group has employed dependency theory to argue that colonial policies facilitated the systematic underdevelopment of African societies in order to meet the cheap labor demands of capital based in the (white) sub-metropol. The "rise and fall of the Southern African peasantry" has been traced, through land alienation, segregation, market manipulation discriminatory to peasant producers, and the cooptation of key black elite groups, to the emergence of an alliance of "gold and maize."[16] In much of their work the white revisionists have echoed earlier Marxist interpretations of the South African political economy, which have been popularized since the turn of the century in the international and domestic radicial press as

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14. Anthony Trollope *South Africa*, (A.A. Balkema, Cape Town 1973 reprint of 1878 original.) p.397-98.

15. Since the academic history of South Africa has been almost entirely shaped by whites within the context of a social order of absolute white supremacy it is absurd to suggest that one can speak of an existing historiography of South Africa which is non-racial. By way of analogy while it is possible for white scholars to contribute to a historic understanding of the African-American experiance the legitimacy of their work would be questioned if they monopolized the field.

16. Colin Bundy *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry*, (Heinemann, London 1979). Martin Leggasick "Gold, Agriculture, and Secondary Industry in South Africa, 1885-1970: From Perifery to Sub-Metrapole as a Forced Lobour System" in R. Palmer & N. Parsons (edit.) *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa*, (Heinemann, 1977), pp. 175-200.

well as other writings . In 1933 the then Secretary-General of the South African Communist Party, A.T. Nzula, noted of "British Imperialism's Three Goals":

> "The prime requirements of farming and mining were land and labour. In tackling the land problem, and settling the fate of the black peasantry in doing so, British imperialism was motivated by the wish to: (1) provide farming and mining with sufficient land; (2) provide farming with labour; (3) provide industrial enterprizes with a constant influx of labour from the peasantry. This required the expropriation of indigenous peasant land...The exploitation of the colony required the labour of the entire population, and the expanding mining industry demanded that a reserve of labour be available. But the Boer farmer and the British mining industrialist wanted neither slave nor proletarian, which were expensive and not without their dangers. They wanted a peasant who was tied to the land, who would support himself when not needed to work for his European exploiters, and who could be re-engaged whenever needed. These considerations have been, and still are, the basis of British imperialism's land policy in South Africa. Having expropriated the greater part of the land, the imperialists turned the remainder into so-called native reserves, and crowded the black peasantry on to them.[17]

While early South African Marxists, and their white revisionist heirs, have proved compelling in their analysis of the historical role played by late-nineteenth century mining capital in shaping the rise of the contemporary South African political economy they have underplayed the decisive impact of earlier transformations. This has led to a distorted view which, in contrast to Trollope's observations, suggests that: "After all, looked at in the 1870's rather than the 1970's, on

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17. Robin Cohen (edit & intro) Hugh Jenkins (trans.) *Forced Labour in Colonial Africa*, (Zed Press, London 1979), p. 50. This is a (according to Appolon Davidson, inferior) translation from Russian of: A.T. Nzulu, I.I. Potekhin, and A.Z. Zusmanovich *The Working Class Movement and Forced Labour in Negro Africa* (Profizdat, Moscow 1933.)

the highveld it is the parallels between white and black societies, between African and Afrikaner, that are striking- at least superficially.[18] Such a view falsely equates the mid-nineteenth century experiences of South Africa's racial victims with their victimizers. Kweneng emerged, in the decades preceding the rise of the mining industry, as a refuge and center of resistance for communities fleeing from Afrikaner agression on the highveld. The ensuing struggle against the machinations of the *Makgoa*, whites in general, continued into the colonial era giving the BaKwena leadership much of the basis for their popular legitimacy.

Beyond their failure to fully confront the nature of economy and society in pre-industrial South Africa, members of the revisionist school have also been criticised by a number of observers who, while in essential agreement about the crucial role played by capitalism in altering black African communities, have objected to the centrist perspective of much of their literature for portraying the emergence of dependency with too much uniformity, thus reducing the victimized communities to the role of passive, structurally doomed, spectators of their own history.[19] Such criticisms have motivated some to re-examine local systems of resource control by attempting to look at the changing relationship between political-economy, socio-cultural organization, and ideology. In studies of SeTswana social orders this tendency has been represented by a handfull of "historical anthropologists," who have advocated an interpretive approach or "processual paradigm" in examining social processes.

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18. Shula Marks in her introduction to S. Marks & A.E. Atmore (edits.) *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*, (Longman, London 1980), p. 33.

19. In particular: Terrence Ranger "Growing from the Roots: Reflections on Peasant Research in Central and Southern Africa" *Journal of Southern African Studies* vol. 5, no. 1 (1978), pp. 99-123.

Use of the processual paradigm in Botswana has, in particular, been articulated in the collaborative and individual studies of Simon Roberts, and John and Jean Comaroff who, borrowing in part from Malinowski's "manipulative man," have attempted to move beyond the structural-functionalist categories that characterize much of Schapera's work.[20] Their contributions have suggested a need for a greater appreciation of the manipulable qualities of principle and procedure among the BaTswana. John Comaroff has, on a theoretical level, sought to relate socio-cultural organization and ideology within SeTswana communities to the encompassing political-economy with reference to two interrelated dialectics, one "internal" and the other "external."[21] According to his model the "internal dialectic" governs processes or "lateral" relations between "local" communities, while the "external dialectic of articulation" involves "vertical" linkages between the local community and its emergent center. This dual approach is said to allow for "an historical anthropology which avoids either (i) reifying and decontextualizing the local communities of the Third World or (ii) denying them any dynamic integrity beyond that wrought by external forces."

Despite Comaroff's explicit emphasis on their interelationship the need for an analytical division between internal and external spheres is questionable. In the past, dependency theorists of the revisionist school have been taken to task for their rationalizing of the boundaries of white oppression by creating discrete zones of core and periphery

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20. For a theoretical definition and defense of this model see- John Comaroff and Simon Roberts *Rules and Processes*, (U. of Chicago, 1981.)

21. John Comaroff "Dialectical Systems, History and Anthropology: Units of Study and Questions of Theory" *Journal of Southern African Studies* vol.8, no. 2 (1982), pp. 143-172.

in the context of a regionally unified macro-economy.[22] It is also arguable that dialectical analysis, in general, imposes equally arbitrary abstract boundaries on the unit of study by predetermining the existence of dualistic patterns of contradiction. The potential for distortion becomes even greater if one assumes, as in the case of most Marxist literature, that social contradictions must conform to a generalizable evolutionary process. This study seeks to avoid such pitfalls through its focus on the flexible, mediating role of socio-cultural order and ideology. A historic narrative of the rise and fall of BaKwena *bogosi* provides a framework within which social processes are given further scope to define themselves, while recognizing that the institution, itself, has not been structurally stable but rather is a element within, and instrument of, a constantly evolving political-economy.

Towards a National Historiography

This study is by its very nature part of the well established phenomenon of non-Africans writing African history. No other continent has had its written history so dominated by outsiders. There is an obvious danger in any historiography becoming largely the preserve of an extraterritorial realm. Expatriate historians have often been less forthcoming in addressing the potential pitfall of an "us" writing about a "them" in such a way that the "them" become objective mirrors of external interests. The individual researcher cannot escape either the reality or responsibility of his/her worldview. But local history (though not necessarily all of its historians) should ultimately be responsible to its domestic audience. This dissertation, as a local case study, seeks first and formost to contribute to the

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22. Anonymous "Neo-Imperialism and the Bogus Theory of Racial Capitialism," in *Ikwezi* (1979), pp. 17-20.

development of Botswana's national historiography. The challenge was eloquently put forward in 1970 by Seretse Khama:

> "We were taught, sometimes in a very positive way, to despise ouselves and our ways of life. We were made to believe that we had no past to speak of, no history to boast of. The past, so far as we were concerned, was just a blank space nothing more. Only the present mattered and we had very little control over it....It should now be our intention to try and retrieve what we can of our past. We should write our own history books, to prove that we did have a past that was just as worth writing and learning about as any other. We must do this for the simple reason that a nation without a past is a lost nation, and a people without a past is a people without a soul."[23]

Two decades later much work remains to be done. In the context of historical underdevelopment the unveiling of national history is part of the ongoing developmental process. In the words of a report prepared for the 1985 *Botswana Society Symposium on Research for Development*:

> "Effective planning for the future depends upon models of how things work, and in most cases such models are based upon projections from past social and economic processes. If these models are not of sufficient time-depth and generality, there is a danger of basing future action on inaccurate or false information. Archeological and historical studies of Botswana's past provide one means for obtaining time depth."[24]

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23. Originally in *Botswana Daily News*, May 19, 1970. In contrast L.B. Greaves *The High Commission Territories*, (Edinburgh House Press, London 1954), p. 7; and B.A. Young *Bechuanaland* (HMSO, Corona Library, London 1965) p. 121; both describe the people of Bechuanaland as being "happy" for being "without history."

24. Jim Denbow, David Kiyaga-Mulindwa, and Neil Parsons "Paper 12- Historical and Archeological Research in Botswana," (symposium papers to appear in forthcoming Botswana Society publication.)

National history, as distinct from nationalist history, is simply the study of past processes in the geographic context of a particular nation-state. There is no insoluble contradiction between local, national, regional and international perspectives in that each can in turn become a thread within a larger fabric. Thus, as previously suggested, this study, set as it is in Kweneng, seeks to uncover but a fragment of the mosaic that forms its wider context.

There is a long tradition of local studies, often of individual *morafe*, in the annals of Botswana. The roots of this emphasis can be traced to the oral traditions generated from within the *merafe* themselves. During the colonial era two notable collections of "tribal" histories were produced for the benefit of a SeTswana readership. The first history book of Botswana, published in 1913, was *Dico tsa Secwana* ("SeTswana History.")[25] This relatively short book is essentially a compilation of oral traditions collected by local missionaries. When *Dico* first appeared it was criticised by some as being inaccurate as well as inadequate, although it has ironically become a basis for much contemporary "oral tradition." Since the Second World War, *Dico* has been complimented by *Ditirafalo tsa Merafe ya Batswana* ("Events of the *merafe* of the BaTswana"), an edited volume by Isaac Schapera with chapters by Vivian Ellenberger, George Nettleton, and Keodireleng Matthews, as well as Schapera himself.[26] This book, along with additional articles and monographs by each of the above

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25. A.J. Wookey (edit.) *Dinwao leha e le dipolelo kaga dico tsa Secwana*, (Third edition: London Missionary Society, Tiger Kloof 1922.)

26. Issaac Schapera *Ditirafalo tsa Merafe ya Batswana*, (Lovedale Press, Alice 1940.) George Nettleton and Vivian Ellenberger were members of the Protectorate administration. "ZK" Matthews, "the father of the Freedom Charter," was a prominent South African nationalist leader, as well as academic, who, during his final years, also served as Botswana's leading diplomat.

authors, represented an important advance in local historical research. The authors made critical use of both oral and archival materials in order to write a collection of histories that were both for and about, and in the case of Matthews by, BaTswana. Three decades after its publication *Ditirafalo* probably remains the single most popular source of historical information in Botswana. A major limitation of the work is that it is simply a set of, for the most part royally inspired, narratives about the eight colonially recognized *merafe*.[27]

Given its geographic size, and the existence of internal sub-polities and groups within it, it is perhaps not surprizing that much of the post-independence scholarship on Botswana has been locally concentrated. During the early 1970s a generation of doctoral theses established something of a

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27. The colonial era also spawned a local biographical tradition whose products include- Michael Seboni *Kgosi Isang Pilane*, (The Bantu Publishing House, 1961); and *Kgosi Sebele II*, (J.L. van Schaik, 1956.) S.M. Molema *Montshiwa, Barolong Chief and Patriot*, (Struick, Cape Town 1966.) Historical entries by Sol Plaatje and others in Mweli T.D. Skota (edit.) *The African Yearly Register, Being an Illustrated National Biographical Dictionary (Who's Who) of Black Folks in Africa* (1rst edition, The Orange Press, Johannesburg 1931.) S.M. Gabatswane *Introduction to the Bechuanaland Protectorate History and Administration* (Private publication, Kanye 1957); and *Tshekedi Khama of Bechuanaland: Great Statesmen and Politician* (Oxford Univ. Press, London 1961.) And L.D. Raditladi's historical-drama *Motswasele II*, (University of Witwatersrand Press, Johannesburg 1945.) (see also literature on Khama dynasty below)

tradition of sub-national history.[28] Since then local studies have also constituted the largest proportion of works annually produced by fourth year students taking part in the Research Essay Project, organized by the Unversity of Botswana's Department of History.[29] Researchers from outside the discipline of history have also made notable contributions towards regional understanding.[30] These and other works, such as Fred Morton's (forthcoming) history of the Kgatleng during the reign of Linchwe I and the ever expanding literature on Gammangwato (below), have collectively begun to provide a basis for the emergence of a new national history of Botswana capable of replacing *Ditirafalo* and the standard colonialist works of Sillery and Hailey.[31]

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28. Thomas Tlou "A political history of Northwestern Botswana to 1906," (Ph.D. thesis, Wisconsin, 1973): published as *A History of Ngamiland 1750 to 1906: the Formation of an African State* Macmillan Botswana, 1985. Neil Parsons "Khama III, the Bamangwato and the British," (Ph.D. thesis, Edinburgh, 1973.) Leonard Ngcongco "Aspects of the History of the Bangwaketse to 1910," (Ph.D. thesis Dalhousie, 1975.) Gary Okihiro "Hunters, herders, cultivators and traders: interaction and change in the Kalagadi, nineteenth century," (Ph.D. thesis, UCLA, 1976.) Notable recent additions: Diana Wylie "The Center Cannot Hold: The Decline of Ngwato Chieftainship, 1926-1950," (Ph.D. thesis, Yale, 1984); and Themba Mgadla "Missionary and Colonial Education among the Bangwato, 1862 to 1948," (Ph.D. thesis, Boston Univ., 1986.)

29. This program began in 1975/76 and had since produced over 150 orginal research papers.

30. Most notably R.P. Werbner's numerous articles on the North-East; and Edwin Wilmsen *Land Filled with Flies: A Political Economy of the Kalahari*, (Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago 1989.)

31. As evidenced by Thomas Tlou & Alec Campbell *History of Botswana*, (Macmillan Botswana, 1984)(new revised edition forthcoming); and F. Morton, A. Murray & J. Ramsay *A Historical Dictionary of Botswana*, (New Edition: Scarecrow Press, Metuchen N.J. and London 1989); as well as Morton & Ramsay *Birth of Botswana.* Anthony Sillery: *The Bechuanaland Protectorate*, (Oxford Univ. Press, Cape Town 1952); and its inferior follow up *Botswana: a Short Political History*, (Methuen, London 1974.) Lord Hailey: *Native Administration in British African Territories, Part V- The High Commission Territories*, (HMSO, London 1953)

An enduring feature of the historical literature on Bechuanaland/Botswana has been the pre-eminence within it of works relating to the BaNgwato royal family, the Khama dynasty. This pre-eminence holds especially true in the case of the historiography of the colonial era. The attention accorded to the sons of Ngwato is justified by, in particular, the remarkable careers of Khama III, Tshekedi Khama, and Seretse Khama, each of whom made a unique and important contribution to the development of both Botswana and the wider southern African region.[32] Forthcoming biographies, which have already resulted in a number of important articles, by (the late) Michael Crowder, on Tshekedi, and William Henderson, Neil Parsons and Thomas Tlou, on Seretse, furthermore, underscore the continuing relevance of this dynastic focus. An unfortunate product of this wealth of material has been the creation of something approaching a "Khamanist" tendency that intellectually conflates the past fortunes of the genus with those of the nation as a whole. As a result the national, and in particular nationalist, historiography of the country has shown symptoms of becoming "Khamatose." By focusing on what, during the period of this study, was the nation's other leading dynasty, this work will contribute to a broader understanding of the historic role of *bogosi*, including that of the BaNgwato, in the shaping of modern Botswana.

Finally this work is conceived as a contribution towards a nationalist, as well as national, perspective. As such it rejects the critique that nationalist literature is inherently

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32. Neil Parsons "The Image of Khama the Great-1868 to 1970" *Botswna Notes and Records* vol. 3 (1971), pp. 41-58, gives comprehensive account of the extensive literature on Khama III up till 1970, since then notable there have been additions by Mutero Chirenje and Parsons himself. The existing literature on Tshekedi and Seretse includes works by Mary Benson, Julian Mockford, S.M. Gabatswane, and Diana Wiley.

a reflection of narrow elite interests, petty bourgeois or otherwise. Such criticism is often a product of a narrow focus that alienates leadership from the led as well as a nation from its citizens. A major, though hardly unique, challenge facing anyone attempting to write history with a nationalist viewpoint is the temptation, conscious or otherwise, to romanticise past events and/or the individuals who participated in them. Nationalist literature in Africa, as elsewhere, has been targeted by, more often than not expatriate, critics who simply see new national myths superseding colonial era distortions. In addition a strong argument can be made that the reification of nationalism in general is simply a divisive act that runs counter to the need to rationalize the human common ground. Still others take exception to focusing on the nation-state as a unit of study arguing that, in the words of Eric Wolf, by so doing "it is easy to conceive of the nation-state as a structure of social ties informed by moral consensus rather than a nexus of economic, political, and ideological relationships connected to other (global) nexuses."[33]

In the context of southern Africa any discussion linking nationalism with culture, in this case political culture, is further open to justifiable suspicion due to the abuse of both terms by the South African-based *Volkuende* school of Cultural Anthropology, whose dogma that national cultures constitute a primary construct of human existence has provided an intellectual justification for apartheid. In this study, nationalism is not understood as any form of primordial imperative but rather as a human creation which is articulated within a historic process driven by evolving economic, political, and ideological relationships. The ideological

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33. Eric Wolf *Europe and the People without History*, (Univ. of California Press, 1982) p.9.

relationships in this case are expressed as changes within a moral consensus and are not understood as enigmatic "core concepts" located just below the surface of an ethnographically static local environment.

Individuals are free to either celebrate or deprecate any human creation, including that of the nation-state. But history should seek to understand all of humankind's works.[34] In a 1904 speech at Birmingham, Joseph Chamberlain, who as Colonial Secretary played a critical, unwitting, role in the emergence of Botswana, proclaimed: "The day of small nations has passed away; the day of empires has come." This dissertation should help to explain why he was wrong.

A Note on Oral Sources

Although primarily an archival study, this thesis has been assembled through the integration of oral as well as documentry sources. Selection of evidence has been governed by what is essentially an empirical approach shaped, in large part, by this author's field experience. One fundamental guideline in the evaluation of data has been the responsibility to reconcile evidence with an historical chronology. The ambiguity that inevitably emerges due to the fact that the past is articulated, and thus shaped, by the present is accepted as being unavoidable. In this regard the notion that history can be "objective" is rejected, while the moral imperative of an honest approach to the available evidence is affirmed. In other words, while one's understanding

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34. The emergence of Botswana is a development that is celebrated not only by its own citizens but by more than a few outsiders such as the late Steven Biko who cited Botswana as a courtroom rejoinder to a South African advocates questioning of the black race's capacity for "democracy": Steven Biko *Testimony of Steve Biko*, edited by Milliard Arnold (Biko Family Trust, London 1979) p. 43.

of the past is shaped by the present it should not be created by it.

The boundary between the oral and archival data on Botswana's history is ambiguous. Since the late-nineteenth century the use of oral sources by both scholars and non-scholars alike, has been central to the evolution of knowledge about the past. This phenomenon is reflected in literary and ethnographic works, as well as historical studies such as *Dico* and *Ditirafalo*. A product of this development has been the preservation of a body of recorded oral data by researchers. Parallel to the above process has been the creation of additional recorded oral data by branches of the colonial and post-colonial governments as well as by non-governmental organizations. One can thus divide recorded oral data into three general categories: (a) testimony found in various documentry sources such as kgotla and court records, the minutes of public and private bodies and/or gatherings, and intelligence and police reports, (b) surviving historical evidence collected by missionaries, officials, and researchers, and (c) material that has been generated by post-independence scholarship.

Evidence within each of the above three categories has, of course, been shaped by, often alien, individual and/or institutional biases. Despite this fundamental fact one finds preserved within them contradictory voices articulated from diverse segments of society. In terms of both quantity and quality the richest single source of recorded oral data is to be found in the first ("a") category. This study benefited, in particular, from the existence of a large number of verbatim transcripts of major public enquiries, some lasting for several days. By their very nature such meetings, often held in kgotla, gave scope for the voicing of divergent opinion, which at times was drawn from across the social spectrum of a

given *morafe*. Although arguments were often framed in terms of customary precedents the transcripts occasionally documented shifts in the prevailing social consensus. For example an evolution in BaKwena ideology, at least as it was publicly articulated, is suggested by comparing the testimonies of the 1926, 1928, and 1929 imperial enquiries into the conduct of Kgosi Sebele II.[35] During each of the enquiries the Kgosi enjoyed broad support among those who were at the time labelled as "commoners." Opposing him was a small clique of self-described "leading headmen," who sought to transfer power to themselves as a self-appointed "Tribal Council." In this context the 1929 meeting was unique in that, apparently for the first time, a number of now self-proclaimed commoners rose to speak in the name of commoners in general, with a few proposing that a governing council be created to rule with the Kgosi that would be elected exclusively from commoner rank (see chapter 5, part 3.)

Official transcripts of various meetings were also found to be frequently valuable as sources of information on topics beyond the immediate questions that they address. Disputes over Native Reserve boundaries, which were a constant feature of the colonial era, were a particularly good sources of information for earlier events. In addition cases in both the Colonial and Customary Courts, along with statements collected by police, were also useful. In 1926, for example, the magistrate's office in Molepolole received a complaint by a "Mosarwa," that his wives and children had been seized and sold by BaKgalagadi.[36] Full statements were subsequently taken from him, his family, their BaKgalagadi masters, and the latter's BaKwena overlords. Taken together these testimonies

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35. BNA S. 23/4, and 23/6/1-2, on Sebele II, 1925-29.
36. BNA DCMol 5/8 "Complaint by Mosarwa Charlie."

are some of the best available evidence on the changing pattern of social subordination in Kweneng during the period.

A common historiographical premise is that the extensive use of oral tradition in scholarly research has been largely a product of post-colonial revisionism. In the case of Botswana, at least, this assumption is unwarrented. While there has been renewed interest in oral history since the 1970s, oral methodology has long played a leading role in shaping the content of local research. Recognition of this fast is important in that, besides informing one's appreciation of certain earlier works, it draws attention to additional compilations of recorded oral data.

This study, and in particular its first two chapters on precolonial history, benefited enormously from evidence obtained from the W.C. Willoughby Papers, located at Shelly Oak College, Birmingham, England, and the Isaac Schapera papers deposited with the Botswana National Archives.[37] The Willoughby Papers incorporate a total of eight hundred and twenty-five files, of which about two dozen were used in this study. Of particular value was (the very thick) file no. 739, which contains a wealth of evidence on the nineteenth century history of Kweneng. Included within it are manuscripts and letters written by BaKwena, as well as recorded oral data and

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37. W.C. Willoughby Papers (WCW/SO): I was unable to visit Shelly Oak but arranged to obtain photo-copies of the complete files that I wanted with the assistence of Don Boschman. This endevour was facilitated by my access to Neil's Parsons and extensive notes on the papers. Through Neil I also was able to eventually obtain a complete index of the papers. Schapera Papers (catalogued as BNA PP): most of these became available during the course of my study following Isaac Schapera's 1985 visit to Gaborone. At that time Schapera generously agreed to make forward to the archives his complete collection of holdings relevant to this study, as well as other materials, to the Archives.

notes by Willoughby himself.[38] Much material from BaKwena sources is also contained in other files, a reflection of the fact that during his last two years as a missionary Willoughby was posted at Molepolole, where he spent much of time collected additional data for his future career as an academic expert on the "Bantu."

The Schapera Papers, which became available at the time of my fieldwork, presently consist of hundred and forty-eight files, almost all of which were consulted. Particularly beneficial were the two files containing recorded oral data on BaKwena history collected by Schapera in 1938.[39] Similar files on various other BaTswana communities were also useful, most especially in reconstructing the period of Civil Wars (chapter 2.)[40]

At times officials in the colonial administration also collected historical information about the various "tribes" in their districts. While the oral data produced by such official research contains useful information it is clear that, to a greater degree than is apparent from the data collected by either Schapera or Willougby, many of the informants saw in such interviews opportunities to either uphold or modify local power structures. For example one especially forthcoming source lobbied for the "restoration" of BaRolong control throughout the western Protectorate.[41] In most areas magistrates relied exclusively on the Chief and/or local "leading headmen" from the capital villages for their information, resulting in a set of data that was essentially

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38. Another valuable source was file no. 382, which contains a 25 page historical analysis by Willoughby on the political situation in Molepolole in 1916.

39. BNA PP 1/1/10-11 "Kwena- Notes History."

40. Especially BNA PP 1/2/1-8, on various groups, and 2/4-9, "Kgatla text."

41. BNA DC Kanye 5/1, (testimony of) Malata.

in accordance with the then prevailing colonial concensus. While not entirely free of such biases the testimonies collected by Schapera and Willoughby constitute much more diverse, as well as extensive, samples.

The value of recorded oral data has increased with the progressive passing away of each generation. Today there are few, if any, BaTswana who were socialized into the institutional and ideological framework of pre-industrial SeTswana norms. Contemporary researchers, be they BaTswana or outsiders, are finding it increasingly difficult to collect testimony in the field that is substantial and accurate about many aspects of the past, which are outside the actual life experiences of their informants. Today there are, for example, few BaTswana, except in certain local areas, who have attended the old initiation schools (*bogwera* and *bojale*) that once served as institutional foci for the intra-generational transmission of SeTswana law and custom.[42] In 1970 Thomas Tlou, in writing about his own use of oral methodology in reconstructing events of the nineteenth century, warned: "My research in Ngamiland convinced me that in Botswana most of the knowledgable old men, the irreplaceable repositories of traditions, will probably be dead in a decade or so." Today a de facto sixty year rule governs the viability of much of the primary oral data that one can collect through interviews, although there are questions, and methodologies, as well as individual exceptions, which escape this arbitrary time frame.

My own collection of primary oral data, as well as transcripts of recent interviews conducted by others, notably the "historical texts" appended to the research essays produced by fourth year students of the Department of History, University of Botswana, convinced me that generally much of

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42. In Kweneng the last officially sanctioned initiation occured in 1931 (chapter 5.)

what could be gathered concerning the reigns of Sebele I (1892-1911) and Sechele II (1911-18), much less earlier times, was either insubstantial or the reproduction of information fround in written materials, such as *Dico* and *Ditirafalo*.[43] It was therefore felt that reliance on primary oral data to uncover either the events or cultural concepts of the nineteenth century would be unworkable. Given that the textual sources of much received oral data were, themselves, products and reflections of a colonial concensus, such an approach could have, ironically, also contributed to the furthering of the already existing dissonance created by a post-colonial scholarship that has been unduly shaped by imperialist mythicizing.

Between 1985 and 1987 I conducted sixty formal interviews, mostly with individuals but occasionally in group settings.[44] Over half of the interviews were carried out in Molepolole, the capital village of Kweneng. Other interviews took place at Gabane, Gaborone, Kumakwane, Lephephe, Letlhakeng, Mmankgodi, Mosopa, Shoshong, Thamaga, and Tlokweng. Predictably some individuals proved to be especially good sources of information and, when possible, were visited on more than one occasion. Given the perceived limitations governing primary oral data, as outlined above, most of my interviews focused on the period since c.1925. As can be seen by a number of citations in the main body of this text, there are exceptions to this general pattern. In most cases these exceptions are rooted in information about events involving an ancestor of the informant, which have survived as family traditions. In the relative absence of alternative sources,

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43. The historical texts are appended to the original copies of research essays located in the Botswana Collection of the University of Botswana Library.

44. A listing of the interviews can be found in the "Bibliography."

primary oral data also often provided the best available accounts of important events of the earlier past of various non-BaKwena communities, although I have no reason to believe that the overall quality of such information is any better than BaKwena traditions of the same vintage.

During most of my fieldwork in Molepolole, Gabane, and Letlhakeng, I enjoyed the invaluable assistance of Titus Mbuya and Selebatso Masimega, who shared their own interest in BaKwena history.[45] Both accompanied me on many of my interviews, participating in the questioning and assisting with translation.[46] They also assisted in the location and evaluation of informants. In seeking interviews efforts were made to assure that different village sections, social groups, and viewpoints were represented. In addition to the guidence of my colleagues, I had, from the beginning, the great advantage of having read the transcripts of previous interviews carried out by University of Botswana students.

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45. Titus Mbuya is a talented novelist, journalist, and union activist, as well as historian. At the time I was conducting my fieldwork he was posted as history teacher at Kgari Sechele II Senior Secondary School, Molepolole, and had produced a notable study: "Legitimacy and Succession in Chieftainship in Tswana States: The Case of the Bakwena, 1930-63," (Univ. of Botswana Fourth Year History Research Essay, 1984.) Selebatso Masimega has been assisting researchers in Kweneng since the late 1930's. He once served as the BaKwena Tribal Secretary and has also contributed to the community as, among other things, a teacher, journalist, early nationalist politician, and praise poet.

46. Although I greatly benefited from my own imperfect knowledge of SeTswana, I lacked the fluency necessary to conduct unassisted interviews in the language. For fieldwork carried out in August of 1985 I hired Golele Mosinye, then an "A" levels student at Marupula College, as a translator, and in January of 1986 I collaborated with Glorius Gumbo, who was then conducting reserch for his "The Politics of the Demarcation of Reserve Boundaries in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, with special reference to the common border between the Bangwato, Bakwena, and Bakgatla, 1885-1899," (Univ. of Botswana Fourth Year History Research Essay, 1986.), in carrying out interviews at Lephephe and Shoshong.

One of my initial research goals, which I was able to carry out, was to collect data from within the larger settlements of south-eastern Kweneng, which historically have been the centers of BaTswana groups "allied" to the BaKwena. In Gabane, Kumakwane, Mmankodi, and Thamaga I was initially assisted by the local diKgosi, while in Mosopa I had the support of (the late) Mopegi Basimanebotlhe. In these villages as in Molepolole informants expressed a variety of viewpoints about the nature and content of their past. Unfortunately, although I traveled as far as Kang, I did not conduct any formal interviews in the Kweneng-Kgalagadi villages further west than Letlhakeng or in any of the (small) settlements in north-east Kweneng, other than (the not so small) Lephephe.

Finally it should be noted that, in addition to the primary oral data, much of the archival evidence, including recorded oral data, for this dissertation is in SeTswana.[47] This includes a large proportion of the materials found in the Schapera and Willougby papers, as well as sources such as surviving correspondence between various diKgosi and others, periodical articles, kgotla records, and the writings of figures like Michael Seboni and Leetile Raditladi. A number of individuals assisted me by either translating documents or looking over my own translations. In my opinion the failure to fully use all of these sources would have robbed this study of its validity. Also critical were a number of Dutch and German sources, which I arranged to have translated.

The *Longue Duree*

47. Important archival evidence relevant to other areas of Botswana's history, incidentally, exists in IKalanga and other languages.

This study is set largely in the Kweneng and centers among the people known as BaKwena. It is therefore appropriate to briefly define these terms with reference to their geography and early history. On the one hand the natural environment has constituted a, relatively constant, context for the development of "the development of underdevelopment" in modern times. On the other hand a knowledge of local concepts of BaKwena history prior to the emergence of Kweneng as a state is helpful to understanding some of the ideological roots of its economic, political, and social culture. Of particular importance are perceptions of the early connections that existed between the BaKwena and other communities, ties which provided a basis for subsequent inter-relationships. Of these perhaps the most notable has been the BaKwena monarchy's longstanding claim of seniority over most of the other major dynasties of Botswana.

To begin with geography, one can say that today Kweneng is a district of about 38,000 square kilometers located in south-central Botswana. It is, and during the period covered throughout the whole of this study has remained, a marginal environment largely due to its relatively modest, and very often totally inadequate, rainfall. Like most of Botswana, the district is semi-arid and prone to cycles of prolonged drought. The chronology of rainlessness in the region since the mid-nineteenth century is well documented in surviving traveller's accounts, colonial and missionary reports, as well as oral traditions. This evidence collectively confirms that drought has afflicted Kweneng for extended periods in each decade since at least the 1840s. Rain when it does come usually falls during the austral summer months, and is often quite irregular in both its timing and distribution. Flooding is also a recurrent problem. In general, precipitation falls most heavily in the east and gradually diminishes as one moves westward, but it is common to have radical variations

between areas only a few kilometers apart. Given its feast and famine nature, an extreme example of the continental capriciousness of the sub-equatorial Intertropical Convergence Zone, it is hard to overestimate the overall importance of rain to the region's development. Culturally, the precious nature of water in SeTswana is reflected in the chants of *pula!*, "rain," which often punctuate public dialogue as well as the (not entirely) past importance of rainmaking as a social ritual. The effects of drought on the Kweneng environment are captured in the following passage written by Hayden Lewis, a Molepolole missionary, in 1913.

> "It is the last day of the old year and I look through the open doors upon a vast expanse of apparently lifeless veldt. The kloof, at the other end of which stand the ruins of the old mission house, looks brown and bare, while the river bed has been turned into a chain of water-holes, with very scant supplies of water shimmering in the gloom of their dark recesses. The tired cattle stand about waiting their turn for a drink which, if they have sheperds unable to force their claims, does not come until very late in the day, if at all....With their gardens unploughed, the grass and water so scarce and becoming more so every day, and with the cattle in a state of semi-starvation, the natives find themselves at wits end to know how to keep body and soul together. The cattle are worth little more than the value of their hides, and this means the closing down of the only bank into which the native puts his wealth....One of the most depressing circumstances connected with such times as we are now passing through is that of the gradual fixation of what I can only describe as 'the hunger look' upon the faces of so many of our people. One sees it from the pulpit, and meets with it almost hourly in conversation."[48]

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48. From report by Haydon Lewis in the *One hundred nineteenth Report of the London Missionary Society*, (London Missionary Society, London, 1914) p. 260 Full report can also be found in LMS/WCM 1913 annual reports of stations in South Africa.

The specter of "the hunger look" has been a haunting fact of life for the the peoples of the Kweneng throughout the period covered by this study. As a historical force, the recurring threat of famine has been both a subtle and dramatic factor in shaping local processes of change.

While the vegetation of Kweneng can be characterized as uniformly savanna it is divided into two distinct ecological zones. The western 80% or so of the district is made up of Kgalagadi sandveld. The soil in this region of bush and grassy plain is poorly suited for arable argriculture. But included in its botany are a host of wild plants, tubers and desert melons, which provide fluid as well as nutrition when consumed by man or beast. Arable farming, along with most of the district's population, has therefore been concentrated in the relatively more fertile south-eastern hardveld zone of bedrock soils, thornbush and, now largely depleted, hardwood forest. Here most of the larger villages have, during the past century and a half, been located around a few normally non-perennial watercourses, where wells are located. In the west, settlement has tended to be more scattered and seasonal, clustering around wells, pans and in more recent times boreholes. Settlement patterns throughout the entire area have changed over time.[49] It seems likely that in the past there existed a more extensive pattern of shifting cultivation than prevails today. The concept of settlement can, moreover, only be understood in the context of traditional tri-local patterns of spatial organization by which most households divide their

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49. For an important national overview of subject- R. Renee Hitchcock and Mary R. Smith (editors) *Proceedings of the Symposium on Settlement in Botswana, The Historical Development of the Human Landscape* (National Museum Gaborone, August 4th to 8th, 1980- Heinemann Educational Books in collaboration with the Botswana Society, 1982) and Robson Silitshena "Changing settlement patterns in Botswana; the case of Eastern Kweneng." (unpublished (?) PhD dissertation, University of Sussex, England 1979.)

time and resources in activities situated within their town/village (*motse*), arable lands (*masimo*), and cattleposts (*meraka*).

Enviromental contraints have contributed to a continuing pattern of economic life in the district that is typified by households combining a multiplicity of pursuits, namely agro-pastoralism, hunting, gathering and, since the 19th century, labour migration by both genders. Whether one chooses to rationalize this mix of activities in terms of either utility maximization and/or risk aversion, it is obvious that they cannot be disaggregated into discrete modes of production. For over a century the Kweneng has, to cite but a few coexisting occupational stereotypes, been a land of man the hunter/herder/miner and woman the tiller/domestic servant/beer brewer. The relationship between enviromental factors and political subordination in shaping the specific nature of economic activity within Kweneng is explored in chapter four in the context of the ecological crises that afflicted the region during the second decade of colonial rule.

The name Kweneng literally translates as place of the BaKwena, that is the people who dance to the crocodile (*kwena*) totem (*seano/sereto*).[50] Today there are among the Sotho-Tswana speaking peoples of southern Africa a number of widely dispersed groups who together venerate the crocodile and claim common descent from Motone the earliest known BaKwena Kgosi. The contemporary Kweneng District has historically been the domain of one branch of this totemic family, the BaKwena bagaKgabo, whose *morafe* has been established within the area for at least three centuries. Alternative designations for the

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50. Traditionally one's SeKwena allegiance is manifest in one's praise, *seboko* and adhearence to group taboo(s), *seila*. An individuals totemic allegiance is not always congruent with the totem of one's *morafe*.

sub-group are -bagaSechele and -bagaMolepolole, names respectively derived from their most heroic Kgosi and the location that has served since 1864 as their capital.

During precolonial times the area under Bakwena control has waxed and waned considerably. The contemporary boundaries of Kweneng were largely defined by the British between 1895 and 1905 and include many peoples of non-BaKwena origin who, it is nonetheless clear from historical evidence, had by that time been already incorporated into a wider Sekwena political-economy. Historically non-Bakwena have come under Bakwena overrule both through conquest and voluntary incorporation.

Despite the efforts of early researchers, such as W.C. Willoughby, as well as recent advances in the region's archeology, relatively little is known about the history of the BaKwena, or for that matter other BaTswana *merafe*, prior to the mid eighteenth century. The size of the *morafe*, the extent of its hegemony over other groups and whether one can speak of it as constituting a state before the disruptions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are all debatable points. From the many oral traditions which have been preserved relating to the origins of individual *makgotla* as well as *merafe* one can reconstruct a general model of pre-nineteenth century division and dispersal among the BaKwena and other BaTswana groups. These early patterns of political fission indicate the decentralized expansion over a long period of time of the totemic branchs that today make up speakers of what only in the nineteenth century came to be recognized as a common and discrete SeTswana language. The geographic center of the greater SeSotho-Tswana language family has long been the highveld region of modern South Africa, where the majority of SeTswana speakers continue to reside. Prior to the dislocations associated with nineteenth century invasions by Voortrekkers the western BaTswana

peoples living along the Kgalagadi fringe were most likely peripheral, in terms of their economic and political status as well as their geographic distribution, to the SeTswana speakers of the highveld. But in the the absence of additional forms of evidence, in particular more archeological and possibly linguistic data then is presently available, one's confidence in attempts to reconstruct either a chronology for, or the implications of, the expansion of "Tswanadom" prior to the eighteenth century is limited.[51]

The BaKwena bagaKgabo along with other SeTswana and SeKgalagadi speaking groups trace their indigenous inception to the emergence of the mythical first man, referred to by some as Matsieng, and all other living things from the subterranean world through a hole in the ground. Older traditions state that Matsieng was guided out of the bowels of the earth by Lowe, a one legged guiding agent of Tintibane, the, now nearly forgotten, SeTswana spirit of the underworld.[52] A number of caves throughout southern Africa are reputed to be the site of this genesis. Within Botswana their are two such sites. They are Lowe's cave about 40 kilometers north-east of Molepololole and Matsieng's cave not far from Mochudi in the neighboring Kgatleng District. Located at both places

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51. Two notable examples of tracing such expansion, which make use of archeological and linguistic data as well as various oral and documented traditions include two works by Leonard Ngcongco- "Origins of the Tswana", *Pula*, vol. 1, no. 2 (June 1979), pp. 21-46 Neil Parsons "On the Origins of the bamaNgwato", *Botswana Notes and Records*, vol.5 (1973), pp. 82-103.

52. References in WCW/SO 739, "Bakwena," and 770, "Modimo, Medimo, Badimo." Also J.T. Brown *Among the Bantu Nomads*, (Seely, Service & Co., London 1926) p. 110; and BNA PP 1/2/8 Mosweng Lerato. This tradition is reflected in the ancient SeKwena oath: *"Ke a ikana ka Tintibane a ngwana a Mfathshe ka thiba ka lefasthe ka lelemela sefonyana se se kwa go Moseke"* ("I swear by Tintibane, the child of the Earth, I protected myself with the earth, I crept stealthily (like a snake in the grass) in a small flight the one which is at Moseke.")

are rock engravings which are said to be footprints left by the primogenitor/guide and accompanying beasts.

As their patronym suggests the BagaKgabo proper, or "Sons of Kgabo," trace their autonomous origin to the *morafe*'s founder Kgosi Kgabo who by the seventeenth century is said to have peacefully broken away from the authority of his paramount, Kgosi Mogopa, and with his followers established himself west of the Madikwe river in what is now Botswana. As late as the nineteenth century the BaKwena of Kgabo are said to have still referred to themselves as "BagaMogopa."[53] They, along with those *merafe* who subsequently seceded from them, the BaNgwaketse and BaNgwato, still recognize the ritual seniority of the senior Sons of Mogopa, who continue to rule over the BaKwena bagaMogopa located in South Africa.[54]

Over the past century or so the Kgabo dynasty's pretensions of seniority within what has become Botswana have been of greater importance to them than any residual acknowledgement of inferiority to the BagaMogopa dynasty. Three justifications have been put forward to bolster this claim. First, according to BaKwena traditions, all BaTswana once upon a time venerated the crocodile and are thus junior to the royal descendents of Motone, of whom the Sons of Kgabo are the senior local representatives. Besides those groups that identify themselves as BaKwena this tradition finds general acceptance among those *merafe*, such as BaKgatla, BaHurutshe and BaTlaro, who trace their origins to the "BaPhofu Confederacy" an early polity that existed sometime between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries about which little

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53. BNA D.C. Mol. 4/14 "History of the Bakwena" (1926 testimony of Kgabo Tebele & Motswakhumo Kgosidintsi, collected by A. Stigand.)

54. I became aware of this residual recognition through the action and explanation of a local Kgosi in presenting his bride before the BagaMogopa Kgosi.

is known and much speculated. Early nineteenth century accounts, as well as Stow, sometimes refer to many of the BaPhofu groups interchangably as either Bakwena or Bakone, although the later term has become quite ambiguous often denoting people of impoverished and/or BaKgalagadi status within SeTswana society as well as such groups as the "Transvaal AmaNdebele" and Northern Sotho.[55] Ironically a number of SeKgalagadi speaking groups have in the past also referred collectively to the BaTswana peoples living to the east of them as BaKone, which may be evidence that their once was in fact a larger BaKone identity.[56] The contemporary standard SeTswana word for north, *"Bokone"*, is apparently rooted in southern BaTswana references to the land of the BaKone, which has also been referred to as "BoKwena."[57]

The BaKwena also claim to be owners of the land that is now Botswana through their conquest of various "BaKgalagadi" and "BaSarwa" groups whom they found from the time of Kgabo. BaKwena chauvinism in this regard is reflected in their

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55. George Stow *The Native Races of South Africa, A History of the Intrusion of Hottentots and Bantu into the Hunting Grounds of the Bushmen, the Aborigines of the County* (Swan Sonnenschein & Co., London, 1905- reprinted in facsimile by C. Struik, Cape Town, 1964), chapter 25 "The Bakuena or Bakone Tribes" pp. 518-543 (much of Stow's material on the "Bakuena" reportedly came from the Rev. Rodger Price who was based in Molepolole from 1867 to 1884.) J. Campbell *Travels in Southern Africa, Undertaken at the Request of the London Missionary Society; Being a Narrative of a Second Journey into the Interior of that Country* (2 vols., Wesleyan Mission House, London 1822), p. 202; and Robert Moffat *Missionary Labours and Scenes in Southern Africa* (John Snow, London 1842), p. 224.

56. WCW/SO 715, Rramashoana. By the late nineteenth century "BaKone" was apparently the equivalent of "easterner" among at least some "BaKgalagadi".

57. The Rev. J. Tom Brown's still standard *Setswana Dictionary* (a 1925 revision of his father, John Brown's, c.1875 first edition) defines "north" as "*Bakoni; bokwene; botsheka; bokalaka*" further noting that "*bokoni* or *bokwene* is only north to the southern Becwana, and *bokalaka* to those living immediatly to the south of the Makalaka (BaKalanga) tribes."

traditional praise: *"Makgakga mantsho agaMmaseotisanaga"* ("the bold black ones of him who desolates the country") which is said to date from the martial prowess of their *Kgosi* Motswasele I.[58] In their belief in the doctrine of "the right of conquest," the BaKwena have found common ground with other BaTswana groups. On the subject of minority rights in the modern republic one senior Kgosi recently noted: "They (people not belonging to one of the eight "principal" *merafe*) were chasing wild animales, picking wild berries and digging for roots whilst we were developing invincible armies."[59]

Related to the above contention have been pretensions of dynastic leadership that are rooted in Kgosi Sechele's leadership against the Boers, as illustrated by the following opening paragragh by Sechele's son, Kgosi Sebele I, in 1908:

> "Who is the owner of this country? Who gave you all these places? Who could speak with President Paul Kruger? If father Sechele, was not here, this country should have now been the Transvaal today! Who protected and defended all the Sechwana Chiefs against the Boers? Was it not my father? Who was the Governor of this country?" Was it not my father? That protected you and fought for you against the Boers? Was it not my father? Today we are under the great British King Edward VII. Did my father not protect you likewise from the Boers? As Sir Chas. Warren protected Montshiwa in 1884, did not my father do the same? You must remember that my father was your Governor. There were nine Chiefs and my father was the tenth:- Mokgosi, Masege, Menwe, Matlapeng, Mosielele, Maabi, Mangope, Letsebe and Mosenye. Did not my father protected these from their enemies? Was he not the Paramount Chief in the sense of the word?[60]

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58. Isaac Schapera (editor) *Praise Poems of Tswana Chiefs*, (Claredon Press, Oxford 1965), pp. 124-125.

59. Kgosi Linchwe II of Bakgatla bagaKgabo to conference on "Democracy in Botswana," August 1988, Gaborone, as quoated in *Mmegi wa Dikgang* newspaper (vol. 5 no. 29, 6-12 August 1988.)

60. BNA SOC, Sebele I to Batheon I, July 8, 1908.

The third justification for the dynasty's superior status, which is the one most often cited in recent times, is the fact that the BaNgwaketse, BaNgwato and BaTawana *merafe*, which together with the BaKwena have exercised hegemony over most of Botswana, recognize the genealogical seniority of the BagaKgabo. Throughout the colonial period the BaKwena Kgosi was often accorded the status of *primus inter pares* when he met with his royal peers in both colonial and Pan-BaTswana gathering. From time to time BaKwena rulers have attempted, with mixed success, to use their claims to seniority as an ideological basis for further enhancing their power and prestige.

The chronology of the secessions of the BaNgwaketse and BaNgwato, the socalled junior "Sons of Molope," from the "Sons of Kgabo" remains uncertain, but both probably occured during the eighteenth century. Recorded oral data further suggests that these two groups had forged their separate identities long before their actual political break from the BaKwena. Little is known about the circumstances of the BaNgwaketse secession other than it probably occured during the reign of the BaKwena Kgosi Motshodi (c.1740-c.1770.)[61] But a number of sources are in general agreement in explaning the split between the BaNgwato and BaKwena, which is said to have occured during the reign of Moshodi's grandson Kgosi

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61. Dates for Motshodi's reign from Schapera (below.) Leonard Ngcongco "Some Aspects of the History of the Bangwaketse to 1910," pp. 53-57 gives an account of the breakaway of the BaNgwaketse during Motshodi's reign which he places in the late seventeenth century.

Motswasele I (c.1770-c.1785.)[62] The story goes that the BaNgwato were living as a separate village under BaKwena suzerainty at the time of the death of their leader Moleta.[63] Moleta was succeeded by his brother Mokgadi who acted as regent for Moleta's young son Mathiba. Mathiba's mother, who was a MoKwena royal, feared for her son's safety and so placed him under the guardianship of Motswasele I. Motswasele had also taken one of Moleta's duaghters, Kgapye, as his wife. He also wished to marry Kgapye's sister, Moitsetsemane or "Kgapunyane," but Mokgadi refused to give his consent. The Mokwena then approached Mathiba to ask him of his view on the question. Mathiba: "Why do you ask me, am I the Kgosi?" Motswasele: "No, but if I make you *Kgosi* what will your attitude be?" With Motswasele's blessing Mathiba and his followers then strangled Mokgadi in his sleep.

The murder of Mokgadi caused much resentment among the BaNgwato, but Motswasele imposed Mathiba's succession. One of Mokgadi's embittered sons, Mmonwe, thereafter plotted to drive Mathiba and Motswasele apart. His opportunity came during a

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62. Dating of reign is, again, Schapera's and is based on information in BNA PP 1/1/10, Kalayamore Kgakge, and Phutegelo Selemogo. WCW/SO 739, Kgosidintsi, also supports the contention that the period between the death of the venerable Motshodi and that of his great-great-great grandson, Motswasele II, in c. 1821, was relatively brief perhaps, as Schapera estimates, only a half century. Schapera's chronology is further supported by the fact that the BaNgwato Kgosi Mathiba is known to have ruled until about 1795 and to have lived many years thereafter.

63. The following is based on: WCW/SO 739, notes by Willoughby on split; BNA PP 1/1/10, Motswakhumo Kgosidintsi; and Sebele in *Dico*, p. 42, and is consistent with published accounts by Schapera and Nettleton in Isaac Schapera (editor) *Ditirafalo*; as well as Thomas Tlou's "A Political History of Northwestern Botswana to 1906," p. 135. A similar account appears in John T. Brown *Among the Bantu Nomads, A Record of Forty Years Spent Among the Bechuana* (?, London, 1926) pp. 231-232, which is cited by Neil Parsons "On the Origins of the bamaNgwato." In Willoughby's notes Moleta is referred to as Senyarelwe.

period of female initiation, *bojale*. Mmonwe planted the false rumor that the BaKwena had seized the BaNgwato cattle so as to incite the BaNgwato into assaulting the *bojale* camp. Although the BaNgwato quickly realized their error, under the circumstances war was inevitable. Motswasele's men pillaged the BaNgwato, who then fled to the north where they subsequently prospered as an independent *morafe*.

In c.1795 the BaNgwato still under Mathiba were, themselves, embroiled in another power struggle between the Kgosi's sons Khama I and Tawana. Tawana was defeated and his faction, which included Mathiba, took temporary refuge with his mother's people, the BaKwena, before settling in Ngamiland. There they have since become known as the BaTawana.[64] This pattern of intermarriage and intrigue between the BaNgwato and BaKwena royalties was to continue into the colonial era.

Beyond being a source of BaKwena chauvinism, the subordination of various Kgalagadi communities by Kgabo and his immediate successors provided an important social foundation for the subsequent evolution of Kweneng. After leaving Mogopa, Kgabo made his way to the chain of "BaKwena hills," which run south-east to north west through modern

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64. PRO CO 879/91/802, RC to HC, July 18, 1906, enclosing historical notes based on information "given by old people of the Batawana Tribe, in June, 1906, to Mr. J. Ellenberger": Motswasele advised Tawana to go to Kwebe "where the Masarwa were said to be the only occupants of the land." Also Tlou "A Political History of Northwestern Botswana," p. 136.

Molepolole, sometime between c.1480 and c.1740.[65] Upon reaching the hill he encountered and scattered a group of BaKgwatlheng, referred to as BaNakedi in some SeKwena accounts, who then occupied the site. Thus it is said began a long pattern of "BaTswana" aggression and subjugation of the "BaKgalagadi" in "Botswana."[66] It is doubtful that there initially existed any consciousness of, or even context for, a division between these two groups. The present meanings assigned to each of the terms is certainly a product of gradual transformations in the region. As some communities were dispossessed of their land and livestock, and pushed into the desert interior, they became collectively associated with their new enviroment and circumstance as "people of the Kgalagadi." This process of dispossession was still ongoing in the nineteenth century (see chapter 2.) But the basic pattern relations seems to have been set by the time of the BaKwena Regent Tshosa (c. 1803-1807), whose praise poem, contains the suggestive verse: "I oppose the killing of Bakgalagadi, paupers with nothing of their own; a rich man eats those rich like himself, a handsome one eats those handsome as he."[67]

By the beginning of the colonial era many of the BaKgalagadi communities, as well as "Basarwa" or Khoisan speaking peoples of the Kweneng-Kgalagadi, had been reduced to

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65. Although they form an easily identifiable geographic unit the hills are usually referred to by their individual names. Early date is by Willoughby, in WCW/SO, 739, who estimates Kgabo's birth date as 1480 apparently by assigning an estimated average between the generations Bakwena rulers. Gary Okihiro, in "Hunters, Herders, Cultivators, and Traders," p. 14 and appendix A, also uses such an approach in arriving at the mid-sixtenth century as a possible date for the BaKwena conquest. The later date is in various works by Schapera and is based on testimonies in BNA PP 1/1/10. The evidence is inconclusive (c.1650 seems plausible.)

66. For general studies of this process see: Okihiro, "Hunters, Herders, Cultivators, and Traders;" and Wilmsen, *Land Filled with Flies*.

67. Isaac Schapera *Praise Poems*, p. 126.

the status of *malata* or servants of the Sons of Kgabo. In the Kweneng this institution of servitude is properly referred to as *bolata*.[68] The terms *malata* and *bolata* are apparently rooted in the verb *go lata* "to go to" or "to follow." Implied in the names is the legitimizing myth that the servants voluntarily sought the "beneficence" of their masters.[69] The *malata* were made responsible for looking after the herds of the Sons of Kgabo who, in addition, could demand that their women and children serve as household servants. Tribute was also extracted, usually in the form of game products, from the communities. This form of exploitation was greatly intensified by the mid-nineteenth century growth in demand for local ostrich feathers, which, along with ivory, was central to the emergence of the BaKwena state (chapter 1.)

Although in the Kweneng the *malata* class was generally made up of various indigenous groups of SeKgalagadi and Khoisan speaking peoples who had been forcibly incorporated into the BaKwena state, status within and among these subordinate groups was never uniform. The BaKgalagadi of western Kweneng often paid tribute to their BaKwena masters from surpluses that they in turn extracted from their own, usually Khoisan, *malata*. Many tributary groups living in the more remote areas of the Kweneng-Kgalagadi, peoples who were not bonded to the BaKwena by cattle, were, furthermore, able to preserve a large degree of defacto autonomy, which allowed

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68. Much of the literature equates the institution of servitude with the alternate name *botlhanka* which was commonly used to refer to the servile classes in Ngamiland and Gamangwato in particular. In Kweneng the root *"go tlhanka"*, which denotes subordinance, is often applied to broader social catagories. Thus many leading BaKwena were referred to as the Kgosi's *batlhanka*.

69. Gaontatlhe Mautle "Bakgalagadi-Bakwena relationship: A case of slavery, c.1840-c.1920," *Botswana Notes and Records*, vol. 18 (1986), pp. 19-30, p. 22.

them to seek alternative markets for their hunting products outside of the BaKwena tributory network.

The historic role of the Khoisan speaking peoples of the Kweneng-Kgalagadi and elsewhere in southern Africa has long been distorted by the use of the terms "Bushmen," "San," and "MaSarwa" or "BaSarwa." "BaSarwa" or "MaSarwa," is a SeTswana lable historicaly applied to *malata* of Khoisan speaking origin and/or Khoisan speaking hunter-gatherer populations living in the remote Kgalagadi.[70] "BaSarwa" is thus commonly equated with the English terms "Bushman" or "San" with all three terms being popularly defined as nomadic Khoisan speaking hunter-gatherers who are often, furthermore, characterized as conforming to a racial stereotype through such alleged physical features as "peppercorn" hair, small stature, "yellowish" complexion, naturally erect penises and steatopygia. These definitions are inaccurate and misleading. The origins of such stereotyping can be traced to the seventeenth century Dutch settlers at the Cape who distinguished between the "click-speaking" peoples with whom they came into contact by labling the pastoral populations "Hottentots" and the non-pastoralists "Bushmen". Later the euphemisms "Khoi" and "San" were substituted for "Hottentot" and "Bushman" respectively without in any way altering the criteria for the two categories.

Historical and archeological evidence in the region has clearly shown that there is no justification for suggesting that particular modes of production have remained exclusive to particular groups of people over an extended period of time. Populations commonly referred to as "Bushmen," "San," or

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70. The prefixs "le-" and "ma-" in SeTswana have historically been applied to outsiders and/or those of inferior status and are thus understood by many to be pejoritive if used to refer to local groups.

"BaSarwa" have historically engaged in such "traditional" economic pursuits as cattle-keeping, fishing, trade, and agriculture, as well as hunting and gathering and, by the 1920's in Kweneng if not before, mining and other forms of migrant labor.[71] Linguists are, furthermore, unable to offer any linguistic basis for the division between "Khoi" and "San;" and the legitimacy of even a common "Khoisan" language family for various non-Bantu "click-speaking" peoples of southern Africa has been questioned.[72] Finally, while there is no biological basis for speaking of races in general, the physical characteristics associated with the "Bushman" stereotype are in fact neither internally consistent nor exclusive to any southern African group.

The "BaSarwa" peoples who were incorporated to a greater or lesser extent within the BaKwena domain are almost entirely made up of peoples who either presently or in the recent past spoke one of a number of dialects of either Khoe, !Xo, or /Hua, three distinct and mutually un-intelligible language groups.[73] In this thesis the term "BaSarwa" is understood to refer to a SeTswana social category. When possible various Khoisan speaking populations are referred to by their proper names. Except in quotation or when referring to mythical ethnographic concepts, the terms "San" and "Bushman" will be avoided.

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71. BNA S. 47/1 RMMol to RC, Dec. 28, 1929, refers to "Masarwa" taking up three month contracts with the Premier Mine.

72. Anthony Traill, "The Languages of the Bushmen," in Phillip Tobias (edit.) *The Bushmen* (Human & Rousseau, Cape Town 1978), pp. 137-47.

73. The "Khoisan" groups of Kweneng discussed in detail in Helga Vierich "The Kua of the Southeastern Kalahari- A Study in the Socio-Ecology of Dependency," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto 1981.) I have substituted the more general term "Khoe" for the people Vierich collectively refers to as "Tshu-kwe."

The term "BaKgalagadi" is also controversial. In this study the term is often used to collectively refer to a number of related peoples, such as BaKgwatheng, BaNgologa, BaBolaongwe and BaShaga, who speak dialects of SeKgalagadi, a Sotho-Tswana language related to, but separate from, SeTswana. This linguistic definition is modified by the reality that various dialects of SeKgalagadi and SeTswana exist within a linguistic spectrum which lacks any agreed upon boundary. It is also clear that many BaTswana are descended from peoples who could be classified as BaKgalagadi, while virtually all BaKgalagadi groups claim BaTswana origin. The name itself can simply refer to any people of the Kgalagadi region and until recently it was fairly common for speakers of eastern SeTswana dialects to refer to all western BaTswana groups, such as the BaKwena of this study, as BaKgalagadi. Unless otherwise specified in this thesis the term BaKgalagadi will be applied to identifiable SeKgalagadi-speaking populations.

Besides providing a foundation for the emergence of a local system of servitude, Kgabo's conquest was also significant in that it established the BaKwena Hills as his group's epicenter. Control of this region provided the *morafe* with a secure geographic base from which they could expand their influence. Geographically the hills divide the south-eastern hardveld from the western sandveld zones of Kweneng. This strategic position as "the gateway of the Kgalagadi" has allowed the BaKwena to control southern and eastern access to the interior. The contour of the hills have also made them ideal as a defensive position. Since the time of Kgabo, most of the capital villages of the BaKwena, including Molepolole, have been situated among the hills.

Finally if acknowledgement of our relative ignorance warns us not to assume a straightforward continuity between BaKwena history before and after 1820, it should also caution

us from dismissing the possibilities of greater degree persistence than has been outlined. By their very nature oral accounts of the distant past will inevitably telescope, simplify and often personify longterm movements. An example of the drawbacks thus associated with oral data can be seen in its still ongoing misuse to support the false, but for many whites oddly comforting, argument that "Bantu" speakers migrated into the sub-continent at about the same time as the first European settlers.[74] Most of what we will ever know about the nature of Kweneng prior to 1820 probably remains buried awaiting the methodical blade of the archeologist.

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74. As methodology this approach (which of course ignores the many oral traditions of indigenous origen such as those involving Matsieng's cave) is analogous to James Ussher's use of biblical texts to date the dawn of creation (October 24, 4004 B.C.E., at 9:30 A.M.)

Chapter 1

FOUNDING A KINGDOM

This chapter examines the emergence of the BaKwena monarchical state in south-central Botswana by focusing on the leadership of Kgosi Sechele I (c.1833-92.) It traces his and his people's fortunes from the time of his father's regicide until the establishment of peaceful relations with the South African Republic in the aftermath of the BaTswana-Boer War of 1852-53. During these hostilities most of the BaTswana groups then living west of the Madikwe river coelesced behind Sechele in order to resist subjugation and enslavement by the Transvaal Boers. Much of the narrative is devoted to this conflict and to the factors, most notably the growing trade in arms for gameproducts, which not only shaped but were shaped by it. Beyond the important fact that Boer expansionism into modern Botswana was checked, this process of armed resistence coupled with commercial expansion led to the formation of Sechele's Kingdom as a regional power.

Part 1: The Orphan and the Ants

> "The State is a compact formed by the living to link those who are dead with those who are yet unborn"- Edmund Burke

There is a SeKwena saying: *BaKwena ba ga se bolaya Kgosi*, that is "the BaKwena who can kill their Kgosi." Over the years these words have been voiced with pride, shame and resignation, as a praise and a curse, about the audacious sons of Kgabo whose forefathers had proved themselves capable of such a profane deed. The origins of the saying can be traced to the regicide of Motswasele II at Shokwane c. 1821. It was an important event that proved to be both terminal and seminal in that it shattered the *morafe* which, in turn, led to the community's reconstruction as the political core of a new

state. Motswasele was the son of Legwale of Seitlhamo of Motswasele of Legojane of Motshudi the junior son of Kgabo who was, himself another seven generations removed from Motone the earliest known Kgosi of the people who dance to the *kwena* (crocodile) totem.[1] To his people he had become simply known as *Modimowagae*, "god of the home (village)."[2] This title was given to him because of the goods he received from visiting *Makgoa*, the red/white men who had been vomited (*go kgwa*) from a distant sea to cause anxiety (*go kgoa*.)[3] Prominent among the visitors was the ill-fated 1808 expedition of Cowan and Donovan, which were associated with the appearence of wagons in Kweneng.[4] As Kgosi he was the Great Crocodile, the head of the *morafe*, its supreme ruler and military commander, the personification of its law and custom who also served as the ultimate repository of communal wealth.

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1. According to his grandson Sebele I in *Dico*, pp. 40-41 (The direct line from Motone was Phokotsea, Masilo, Kwena, Phoketsea (II), Kgabo ya molelo, and Tebele the father of Kgabo.)

2. Sebele, in Dico, p. 43; BNA PP 1/1/10 Kwadira Lesele; also found in Isaac Schapera *Ditirafalo*, pp. 42-43 and "Notes on the early history of the Kwena (Bakwena-bagaSechele)", *Botswana Notes and Records*, vol. 12, 1980, pp. 83-84.

3. The tradition that the name *"makgoa"* is derived from *go kgwa* in the context of thrown up from the sea is supported by Gustav Fritsch *Drie Jahre in Sud-Afrika* (Firdinand Hirt, Breslau 1868) p. 299 and (as Fritsch himself notes) is consistent with the names given to Europeans by many Southern African groups. Rrapuleng/Philip Gowen, private communication, confirmed by others, states that *go kgoa* is an old SeTswana equivalent of *go tshwenya*- to worry. Additional etymologies have been suggested.

4. Sebebe, in Dico, 43. Additional evidence of their visit in Robert Moffat *Apprenticeship at Kuruman* (edit. by I. Schapera, Chatto & Windus, London 1951) p. 78, 141 (journal entries for May 16, 1823, and August 6, 1824- based on an interviews with BaKwena in Gangwaketse.) Also R. Moffat *Missionary Labours* and Scenes in Southern Africa (John Snow, London 1842.) David Livingstone *Missionary Travels and Reserches in South Africa* (John Murray, London 1912), p. 13; and *Family Correspondence* (edit. by I. Schapera, 2 vols., Chatto & Windus, London 1959) v. 2, p. 98.

Motswasele's authority transcended temporal matters for he was to his followers the highest human link between the world of the living and that of the *badimo*, that is the ancestors or living dead who serve as the living's unseen guardians. It was the *badimo* who, upon his birth, were credited with having invested him with his authority. At his installation he may have been, as were later diKgosi, warned of his responsibilities in this respect with the admonition that the people placed under his care were not his but his father's ("Ga se batho ba gago, ke ba ga rrago").[5] While traditionally a Kgosi has been, in the words of Gabriel Setiloane, "a mediator of grace flowing from *badimo*," his access to unseen power has been mediated by his dependence on various types of *dingaka*, practioners of medicine and magic as well as, in at least some cases, sorcery (*boloi*).[6] Motswasele's execution has thus come to be seen by some as an act of spiritual as well as political significance.

Motswasele, along with three of his followers, was executed while fleeing from a *letsholo*, an armed meeting held in the veld, usually following a communal hunt, for which attendance is compulsory for all male adults.[7] During these assemblies, whose proceedings are supposed to be strictly confidential, matters of grave importance can be discussed and acted upon. In the past a *letsholo* could sanction the death of a Kgosi. Various accounts are in agreement that the second Motswasele met his fate as a result of plotting on the part of his brother Segokotlo and cousin Moruakgomo Tshosa. Both of these perpetrators' are said to have been motivated by

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5. Schapera *Tswana Law and Custom*, p. 68.

6. Gabriel Setiloane, *The Image of God Among the Sotho-Tswana*, p. 26. Also WCW/SO 798, Thatalhone.

7. Detailed accounts of Motswasele II's death in WCW/SO 739: Mmakgama, Ramashona, Sechele II and Moiteelasilo Sebele, Kalayamore, and Kgosidintsi. Also Sebele, in Dico, pp. 43-45; and BNA PP 1/1/10, Kwadira Lesele, Phutegelo.

their personal ambitions, fueled by past feuds over *bogosi*, as well as the Kgosi's own cruelty and acquisitiveness.

Moruakgomo's father, Tshosa, had been born before his senior brother Kgosi Legwale (c. 1795-1803), the father of Motswasele.[8] Legwale's seniority was derived from the fact that MmaLegwale had been declared the great wife of Kgosi Seitlhamo (c. 1785-95) at the time of her betrothal, an act which would have been sanctioned by the entire *morafe* in their agreement to pay collectively her bride wealth (*bogadi*.) At one point Seitlhamo called together a large assembly (*pitso*) in order to have Tshosa declared as his heir but this attempt to alter the line of succession was defeated through the forceful intervention of the MaGata regiment led by another brother, Maleke. Motswasele's own alleged transgressions included the arbitrary taking of milksacks, meat and wives (pretensions of *droit du seigneur*) of his subjects as well as the killing of at least one innocent without trial.

It is said that before his last fateful meeting Motswasele was warned by Sejo Monametse and Mojela of the conspiracy but replied "if they kill me they will not live together afterwards, but will fight amongst themselves."[9] He is further said to have warned that his father's ants would come to avenge him.[10] According to some, he prophesied that first would come the black ants of the BaKololo and AmaNdebele, and

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8. Following from WCW/SO 739 Kgabo Tebele, M.S. and praise poems.

9. WCW/SO 739: According to Motswasele's son Kgosidintsi, Motswasele actually said the following proverb: "Dirotela puriretse tsa rotelela tsabobne, tse tharo tsa tloga tsa rotelana" which literally translates as urinating on each other. I have not been able to translate "puriretse" but "dirotela" is said in Willoughby's notes to be a metaphor for fighting in groups.

10. Early references by Sebele, Dico, p. 45; and WCW/SO 738 Kalayamore.

then the red or white ants of the Boer/*Makgoa* invasions. The ants brought with them four decades of chaos and conflict out of which came a new order.

BaTswana have long argued over the moral of Motswasele's death. Although not an original event, some have come to look upon his execution as the archetype of popular retribution against a corrupt ruler.[11] For others the subsequent fulfillment of the fallen monarch's vengeful prophecy has been an object lesson in the danger that arises when a proper social order is subverted by usurpers. Not all have been content to assign guilt. Rather like the ruling class of post-Restoration England, many have seen in the regicide evidence of the need for a strong Kgotla to check both the excesses of the Kgosi and the conspiracies of power hungry royal relatives.

The exalted status of a kgosi has historically been focused on the institution, *bogosi*, rather than its occupant. Although some rulers have been addressed, on occasion, as "my god" (*modimo yame*), their subjects were under no illusions about their mortal nature. In other words BaTswana and BaSotho have long made a distinction between their veneration of the institution of *bogosi* and their expectations for its individual incumbents. Noted one early nineteenth century MoSotho leader: "After all we are but your servants, men are born and die in the same manner, be they high or low, if there are some who are entitled to obediance, they derive this right from their fellows, who will it thus for the welfare of all."[12]

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11. Most notably Leetile Raditladi who made his crime and punishment the basis of perhaps the most important SeTswana literary critique of the abuse of power- Leetile Raditladi *Motswasele II: historical drama in Tswana* (Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg, 1945.)

12. Eugene Casalis *Twenty-Three Years in South Africa*, (Nisbet, London 1861), p. 206.

This ideal of duty is further reflected in such sayings as "A kgosi is a wife to his people" (*Kgosi ke mosadi wa morafe*). Definitions of institutional legitimacy have, however, been more ambiguous. This fact finds expression in the contrast between the well established adages: "A kgosi is a kgosi by the people" (*Kgosi ke kgosi ka batho*) and "A kgosi is a kgosi because he is born to it" (*Kgosi ke kgosi ka a tsetswe*).

Motswasele II left in his wake six sons born of six wives. His senior son, Sechele, was born c. 1810 to Sejelo the daughter of Ramodisa, who was himself a junior son of Motswasele I and thus an uncle to his son-in-law. The wedlock of Sechele's parents thus conformed to the SeTswana ideal of cross cousin marriage, a fact that when contrasted with the genealogies of the other six recognized wives of Motswasele supports the consensus that Sechele's primogeniture was indeed accepted from the time of his birth.[13] Sechele's brothers, in accordance with their traditional ranking, were: Kgosidintsi, Basiamang, Tebele, Kekgethile, Sekwene, and Kgafela. By far the most prominent among these names was that of Kgosidintsi, the son of Mabyeng whose father, Nogwana Rammahaka, was the leader of the BaRokologadi booSeletlo.[14] Apparently Kgosidintsi was born before Sechele, although he never disputed his junior status.[15] Both he and his descendents have consistently played a role in BaKwena affairs second only to that of the Sechele line.

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13. For cross cousin marriage see Schapera, *Tswana Law and Custom*, p. 128: appropriate proverbs include "A man's cousin is his wife" (*Ntsala wa motho ke mogatse*), and "Child of my paternal uncle, marry me, so that the cattle may return to the kraal" (*Ngwana wa rrangwana nyale, kgomo di boele sakeng.*)

14. Isaac Schapera "Notes on the early history of the Kwena," p. 85: Nogwana had joined his people with those of Motswasele when the two groups were fighting together against the BaBirwa and the marriage of his daughter was undoubtedly designed to consumate this union.

15. WCW/SO 739, Kgabo Tebele, and 382 "Molepolole at the end of 1915."

Sechele was an exceptional individual, a big man who lived and prospered in challenging times. Even his IKalanga name set him apart.[16] It is tempting to attribute the growth of the BaKwena *bogosi* during his reign simply to his genius; indeed another common SeTswana saying is that "a people exist by the grace of their leader" (*"morafe ke morafe ka Kgosi."*) In the final analysis the *Kgosi*'s greatness was itself rooted in a series of creative internal responses by his *morafe* as a whole to a various challenges and opportunities which were largely external in their origin. The first major challenge facing the BaKwena in the wake of Motswasele's death and the onset of his epoch of the ants was that of survival. Although the concept of the Mfecane (SeTswana: Difakane) as a historical process is a dubious invention of the white historiography of South Africa, there can be no question that for the BaKwena the two decades that followed Motswasele's demise were a period of dislocation and insecurity.[17]

Motswasele's reputed prophecy can be understood with reference to the SeTswana proverb: "the cause of the orphan is contested by the ants" (*molato wa khutsana o lwewa ke ditshowana*). Idiomaticly the adage is said by Setiloane to be

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16. A *sechele* is a type of BaKalanga hoe which the BaKwena aquired through trade. In my own interviews as well as the earlier research of others I have yet to find a satisfactory explanation for the name, although Neil Parsons, private communication, says that the hoe could be symbolic of marriage. The name of Sechele's successor, Sebele, is also IKalanga/SiNdebele. It translates as "truthfully" and is said to have been given to him by an "uncle" who at his birth proclaimed "truthfully a real ruler is born"- BNA PP 1/1/10, Kwadira Lesele. Both the names Sechele and Sebele can be found among the traditional authorities, *BoShe*, of the BaKalanga.

17. Julian Cobbing, in his "The Mfecane as an Alibi: Thoughts on Dithakong and Mbolompo," *Journal of African History*, 29 (1988), pp. 487-519, illustrates that the Mfecane is the product of white historians rationalizing what were in fact largely white induced disruptions of the South African interior.

a warning about the value of humanity, that is to the innate dignity of the individual whose security must be looked after by all because the ants will in the end consume all flesh.'[18] If this interpretation is correct then, when specifically applied to Sechele's youthful circumstance, the proverb becomes rich with irony. His invading "ants" were, in their swarm, symbolic of insecurity and inhumanity. Further shades of meaning can be found in the SeTswana word for "orphan," *khutswana*, which also denotes one who is of lowly birth. In the wake of his father's death the "orphaned" heir found his refuge among humble folks living, it is said, "just like a MoKgalagadi."[19] In his later years he rewarded a number of the commoners who had stood loyally by him in his time of need to leading positions of influence and authority. In so doing he helped to frame what would prove to be a long running division of interests within SeKwena society between the commoners and those who saw themselves as the true Sons of Kgabo over the dispensation of political power. His great-grandson, Sebele II, would ultimately be driven from office due, in part, to charges that "he listened to (the advice) of orphans or nonentities" (*"o utlwana le dikhutsana"*.)[20]

The years between the fall of his father and his own enthronement, c. 1821-33, molded the character of Sechele and

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18. Setiloane, p. 43.

19. BNA PP 1/1/10 Phutegelo. Sechele was not literally an "orphan" in the English sense of the term in that his mother survived until 1842. *Khutswana* can, however, be applied more liberally to one deprived of parental support.

20. Testimony of R.K. Kokorwa in historical texts collected by Titus Mbuya for his study "Legitimacy and Succession in Chieftainship in Tswana States: The Case of the Bakwena, 1930-63" (1984 University of Botswana fourth year history essay, historical texts in appendix.)

his people.[21] In the immediate aftermath of the regicide the Sons of Kgabo was divided by the ambitions of the two principal usurpers: Moruakgomo, the son of Tshosa who was the slain Kgosi's senior living uncle and former regent (*motswaraledi-kgosi*), and Segokotlo Legwale, the late leader's eldest brother. Moruakgomo's faction, the BooRaTshosa who, in a possible reference to the prophecy, came to also be referred to as the "BaMakakana" or "those of the little white ants," soon gained the upper hand.[22] Segokotlo along with his followers, who included Sechele, then no more than ten years in age, and the other sons of Motswasele, were forced to flee to the protection of the BaNgwato Kgosi, Kgari.[23] Kgari is said to have treated Sechele as a son.

In 1824, the first of Modimowagae's "ants" swept through the eastern edge of the Kgalagadi in the form of Sebetwane's BaKololo.[24] There have long been those who contend that Motswaselele had literally commissioned Sebetwane as his agent of revenge, but this seems unlikely given the fact that at least a couple of years stood between the regicide and

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21. The following summary of this era of "wanderings" is generally consistent with Schapera's previous reconstructions in *Ditirafalo*, pp. 44-49 and "Notes on the early history of the Kwena," pp. 86-87.

22. "BaMakakana" in WCW/SO 739, Kalaymore.

23. WCW/SO 739, Kgabo Tebele. A breakdown of the *makgotla* which are known to have initially constituted each faction is offered by Okihiro, "Hunters, Herders," p. 42.

24. R. Moffat *Missionary Labours*, pp. 396-414; and *Apprenticeship in Kuruman*, pp. 138-143.

invasion.[25] A somewhat similar but more plausible contention, made by a MoKwena named Mmupi in 1890, holds that Sebetwane was encouraged by Sechele's BaNgwato protectors to intervene against Moruakgomo.[26] The BaKololo seized control of the Dithejwane hills and, in the process, chased the BooRatshosa, along with the BaNgwaketse, deep into the Kgalagadi. Shortly thereafter they turned on the BaNgwato and their neighbors the BaKaa and BaBirwa. This onslaught coupled with the onset of famine caused Kgari to take his fateful step of invading the territories of the BaKalanga to his north who were then nominally part of the declining Rozwi confederacy.[27] Kgari was killed in battle at the Matopo hills after which his people under the Regent Sedimo, along with Segokotlo's BaKwena, retreated south to the Khutse hills. It was about this time, c. 1826-27, that Sechele and his BaKwena agemates were initiated as part of the "MaLomakgoma" regiment of the BaNgwato heir Khama II.[28]

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25. WCW/SO 739 does contain early testimony that Motswasele sent messengers to Sebetwane to assure his revenge: MmaKgama (a sister to Motswasele II), RaMashwana, Kealeboga & Moiteelasilo Sebele I, and Kalaymore all. Some of the testimonies subsequently collected by Isaac Schapera, in BNA PP 1/1/10 and 1/2/13, as well as myself and others also insist that Motswasele literally invited Sebetwane indicating that it has now become a generally accepted part of the tradition. Earlier David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels*, p. 13, stated that Sebetwane came purposely for revenge and that he actually placed Sechele in power, but, as Anthony Sillery has previously pointed out, *Sechele, The Story of an African Chief* (George Ronald, Oxford 1954) p. 64, Livingstone's contention about the nature of Sechele's restoration is at variance with all other accounts, which are in general agreement about the nature and chronology of his decade of wanderings.

26. Mmupi (RraSeboni) in *Mahoko a Becoana*, 7 (August 1890), p. 61.

27. The history of the Rozwi is detailed by David Beach *History of the Shona from 900-1850* (Mambo Press, Gwelo; & Heinemann, London, 1980.)

28. WCW/SO 739, and BNA PP 1/5/13.

Shortly thereafter the BaKwena seceded from the BaNgwato. They moved first to the Shoshong hills, where they lived among the BaKaa but, after being further troubled by the BaKololo, they settled at Lephephe. There, finding "only a large reed vley with holes that had been made by wild animals," they began to sink wells to water their "large lot of cattle."[29] After a year or so Segokotlo's group was forced to flee yet again from their relatively remote oasis in fear of the second wave of "black ants," the AmaNdebele of Nkosi Umziligazi (Mzilikazi).[30] While migrating towards Letlhakeng Segokoltlo's party encountered and were briefly reunited with the remnants of the BooRaTshosa still under Moruakgomo.[31] Returning to the the Khutswe hills the BaKwena clashed with the BaNgwato who, in turn, sought the assistance of Sebetwane. The BaKwena were soundly defeated. Moruakgomo and Tshosa were among those killed in battle while Sechele became a prisoner of Sebetwane, prior to his being ransomed by Khama II, who now

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29. BPP C.4956 testimony of Kgosidintsi, August 24, 1886.

30. In SeTswana this group was known as the "MaTebele" of "Moselekatse," names which were adopted by English speakers in the region. "AmaNdebele" is a Nguni version of Matebele, the group having also adopted the name given to them by neighboring SeSotho-Tswana communities. An early account of the ambiguities of the term is contained in joint letter by Henry Venable and Alexander Wilson, from Mosega, to Rufus Anderson, foreign secretary of the American Board, Boston, August 18, 1836, published in the *Missionary Herald* (May 1837), pp. 187-193, and republished in D.J. Kotze (edit.) *Letters of American Missionaries 1835-1838*, (Van Riebeek Society, Cape Town, 1950) pp. 124-142. In most SeTswana accounts of the period the term Matebele is generally applied to all groups of invading outsiders although in other SeTswana contexts Matebele can often be specifically equated with speakers of Nguni languages.

31. WCW/SO 739, Kgosidintsi: The BooRaTshosa were at the time returning from Ngamiland where they had refused to become involved in the local dispute between BaTawana Kgosi Moremi I and his rival Motswakhumo.

ruled over the BaNgwato.[32] For their part, the BaKololo moved with each passing year further to the north until they no longer posed any threat to the BaKwena

Those BaKwena who escaped were now said to have been "scattered across the countryside like wild animals" with most eventually regrouping into three factions.[33] One group under Kgame, said to be a junior son of Legwale, settled east of the Madikwe river.[34] The BooRaTshosa moved westwards under the leadership of Moruakgomo's brother Bubi, who acted as regent for his nephew Kgakge, and eventually resettled in the Dithejwane hills. The third group under Segokotlo retreated to Lephephe after battling with the BaKaa in the Shoshong hills. There he was assassinated by his followers. According to tradition he was taken to an antbear hole where he was told that God (*Modimo*) was present. As he stuck his head down the hole to pray for locusts to nourish his starving people, Segokotlo was decapitated and the rest of his body was pushed into the pit. The faction, which thereafter was referred to as the "BaMosima" or "those of the hole," was thereafter led by Molese Legwale.[35]

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32. Sebele, p. 45, and many of the testimonies collected by Schapera in 1938, place Sechele's capture and ransom much earlier during the reign of BaNgwato Kgosi Kgari but I have followed Schapera's lead as well as that of George Nettelton "BaNgwato," in *Ditirafalo*, p. 76, in accepting the latter chronology which is consistent with earlier, more detailed accounts most notably those of Kgosidintsi in BPP C.4956; and WCW/SO 739; and Mmupi in *Mahoko a Becoana*. A detailed account of Sechele's capture by Kgabo Tebele, also in WCW/SO 739, says that he was ransomed by Kgari but in other details fits into the above chronology.

33. Mmupi *Mahoko*

34. This Kgame should not be confused with the BaNgwato line of Kgame (Khama) rulers, Kgame was a contemporary of Khama II. "Kgame" generally considered a more proper spelling of the name but in the case of the BaNgwato royal dynasty I have followed the family's convention and use "Khama".

35. WCW/SO 739, Kayamore.

Shortly after his release from captivity Sechele left the BaNgwato. He intended to rejoin his father's people but was chased away by both Molese and Kgame. Thereafter the latter party fell victim to Umziligazi's warriors. Kgame was executed while his people were reduced to servitude.[36] It was at this time that Sechele's fortunes sank to their lowest point. He wandered the countryside with his mother and his loyal servants Mosimane Mothei and Dipelisa. Without cattle they survived as hunter-gatherers. For a period they lived among the BaKgatla bagaMmanaana and BaHuruthse. The BaHurutshe Kgosi, Moilwa, considered marrying MmaSechele, but his people objected to this out of concern that she might have been polluted by the manner in which her first husband had met his fate. Ostracised once more they returned to their precarious wanderings.

In c. 1833, while they were at a place called Moselebye, Sechele's small party encountered a group of ivory hunter-traders led by David Hume, known as "Taute" in the

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36. They were found in this condition by Andrew Smith and Robert Moffat in 1835: Andrew Smith *Report of expedition for exploring Central Africa*, (Government Gazette Office, Cape Town 1836) p. 30, also *Andrew Smith's Journal of his expedition into the interior of South Africa, 1834-36*, (edit. William Lye, A.A. Balkema for the South African Museum 1975) pp. 266-269; Robert Moffat *The Matebele Journals of Robert Moffat 1829-1860* (edit. by J.P.R. Wallis, Chatto & Windus, London 1945), vol. 1, pp. 101-102; also Captain William C. Harris in 1836: *The Wild Sports in South Africa*, (1852 original reprinted by Struik, Cape Town, 1965) p. 202-205. Wilson and Venable, *Missionary Herald*, May 1837, pp. 197-193, refer to the BaKwena and other conquered groups indirectly as "Balala" as well as "Bechuana".

SeTswana traditions, who hired Mosimane.[37] Hume's men thereafter came upon Molese's BaKwena at Matsheng, near Lephephe. Mosimane, while cautiously keeping to himself underneath one of Hume's wagons, was recognized by Mmupi. That evening he was secretely taken to Senese, another of Sechele's uncles, who, enquired as to his nephew's whereabouts. Without informing Molese, Senese then dispatched two of his servants, Magogwe and Segakisa Rampena, to seek and assist Sechele.[38]

The return of Mosimane, accompanied by Segakisa and Magogwe and the news of Senese's covert support, convinced Sechele that the moment had arrived for him to seek his birthright.[39] Before leaving for Matsheng he was given cattle by the BaNgwaketse leader Sebego who had acquired large herds during his stay in the western Kgalagadi. These were placed in the care of Segakisa who was designated as the *mogotsa-molelelo* or keeper of the royal fire. The herd, called the "Difetlhamelo" or "lighters of the fire," provided Segakisa with a material basis for the formation of his kgotla of the same name, which today survives as one of the principal sections of Molepolole. The dispensation of Difetlhamelo herd marks the known beginning of Sechele's policy of building up

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37. The following account of Sechele's "discovery" is largely based on BNA PP 1/1/10, Kwadira Lasele. His account differs in detail from some of Schapera's other testimonies with regards to the the role of Senese in sending out Mogogwe and Segakisa, but generally agrees with traditions about Segakisa in the Historical Texts appended to Ontiretse S. Selepeng's "Totemism and clans in the history of Kweneng" (1981 University of Botswana fourth year history essay) and O. Segakisa, interviewed August 27, 1985. The date of Hume's expedition to the lands of the BaNgwato and BaKalanga is in Harris, *Wild Sports*, map.

38. Name of the father of Segakisa in Okihiro, "Hunters, Herders, Cultivators, and Traders", p. 62.

39. BNA PP 1/1/10, Phutegelo: In his determination it is said that he overruled the fears of his mother that he would be killed like his father.

his personal following by linking loyal commoners to himself through cattle clientage (*mafisa*.)

Upon his arrival at Matsheng, Sechele waited until dawn before entering the town with Senese at his side.[40] Sechele's arrival coincided with a great communal dance. This affair broke up. Molese retreated to his household as his people recognized and gathered around their long lost son. Among those who initially greeted Sechele was his brother Kgosidintsi, who offered him a goat and a tortoise shell full of milk signaling his acceptance of his younger senior sibling's authority. Sechele subsequenty recognized Kgosidintsi's special status by allowing him to form his own autonomous sub-villge, the Mokgalo ward.

Molese remained cloistered in his house for three days. On the evening of the third day Sechele ordered Rrakobo of the booSeletlo to climb a tree in order to shout out curses at Molese and his regiment, the MaTeane ("the wild dogs.") The next morning the regiment massed at the Kgotla. Despite much pushing and shoving, which resulted in no more than a broken jaw, they found no room for themselves around the fire. Molese appeared but, with a few staunch followers, fled in such haste that he left his wife behind.[41] In this manner Sechele began his reign over the BaKwena.

In contrast to the assassinations of Motswasele II and Segokotlo, the above account of the deposition of Molese, as well as Kgabo's account of the earlier struggle between Legwale and Tshosa over who would succeed Seitlhamo, are examples of the fact that in the past conflict over *bogosi* was often non-violent, involving a demonstrative test of

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40. Following based on BNA PP 1/1/10, Phutegelo.

41. Several years later he was welcomed back by Sechele and died a respected elder among his people.

strength and loyalty between factions, often mobilized along regimental lines. Frequently the smaller party in such cases, especially if organized around a single isolated regiment, would simply back down. If the two factions were irreconcilable the *morafe* could split permanently in the manner of the division between the BaNgwato and BaTawana. Also in some situations an outside force claiming the right of overrule intervened and imposed its will as in the case in Motswasele I's intervention in favor of Mathiba. That *Dikgosi* were deposed in pre-colonial times without violence contradicts the colonial era belief that according to "Native law and custom" only God, witchcraft or the axe could remove a sitting "chief".[42]

At the time of its occurrence the restoration of Sechele was a relatively modest development. The BaKwena remained divided between Sechele's faction at Matsheng, which shortly after his return removed to his father's old location at Shokwane and the remnant of the "BaMakakana" party under Bubi, which after extensive migration settled at a place called Moshokotswe.[43] It is likely that neither group exceeded

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42. This latter contention formed an important part of the Administration's defense in the famous 1936 civil case of Tshekedi Khama and Bathoen II against the High Commissioner over the legality of the 1934 Native Administration and Judicial Proclamations: BNA C/8/725 Administration of Justice-High Court "Special Court of the Bechuanland Protectorate held at Lobatsi, July 6-20, 1936", eight volumes.

43. WCW/SO 739, Kgosidintsi.

a few hundred at the time.[44] Sechele's group was only modestly expanded when it was joined, c.1834, by a party of BaNgwato led by Bobjwale, the widow of Kgosi Kgari who had earlier protected Sechele. Bobjwale, following the death of her childless son Khama II, had sought to act as regent for her second son, the infant Macheng.[45] Macheng was the natural son of the former regent, Sedimo, who had "raised seed" on behalf of his dead uncle Kgari in accordance with the SeTswana practice *seantlo* or substitute spouse. As subsequent developments would confirm Macheng's position as Kgari's second heir was generally accepted but in the wake of Kgama II's demise his elder brother by a junior house, Kgosi Sekgoma I (1834-57, 1858-66, 1873-75), succeeded in usurping power. Bobjwale arrived with both Macheng and her daughter Mokgokgong, who had been betrothed to Sechele following his initiation. Thus the young Kgosi became the guardian of Macheng and the husband of Mokgokgong, who bore him his eldest son, Kgari.[46]

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44. WCW/SO 739: After inspecting the still visible remains at the sites of Sechele's and Motswasele II's towns at Shokwane in June of 1916 Willoughby estimated that the population of the former was not "more than 200 or 300" while the latter once housed "perhaps 2,000". Although Willoughby, himself, emphasized the fact that the above numbers were no more than guesses, they are quite plausible in that Kgosidintsi, in BPP. C.4956, testified that the Bakwena under Segokotlo only numbered about 200 following Sebitwane's attack and, as Okihiro has previously pointed out, in 1842 Livingstone counted 300 Bakwena with Sechele at Tshowane and another 350 Bakwena under Bubi at Dithubaruba- Gary Okihiro "Hunters, Herders, Cultivators, and Traders", pp. 23-24: LMS Livingstone to A. Tideman, June 24, 1843.

45. WCW/SO 739 According to Rradaniele, Macheng was about ten when he was captured in 1842.

46. That Kgari was older than his senior brother Sebele is supported in: WCW/SO 739 "Note A" under (wives of) "Sechele." S.G. Masimega, interviewed July 25, 1985. Also Sebele's obituary in *Diamond Fields Weekly*, January 28, 1911; and BNA DCMol 4/14, Kgabo Tebele and Motswakhumo Kgosidintsi, state that Sebele was born at Tshowane which would place his birth during or after 1842 a date which is consistent his being still a young

Mokgokgong's marriage to Sechele is a source of controversy.[47] To this day some BaKwena elders regard her as having been the most senior, *Mohumagadi a magolo*, of Sechele's wives. Before his marriage, although after his betrothal, to Mokgokgong, Sechele had married Kebalepile the daughter of the slain Segokotlo, who had been recognized as, his great wife. But Kebalepile died while giving birth to her daughter Ope. Thereafter Selemang Kgorwe (MmaSebele) was placed in the house of MmaOpe, an act that was justified in terms of her taking her sisters place in accordance with *seantlo*. Selemang's elevation in this way is unusual given two undisputed facts about the case. First Selemeng, although related to Kebalepile was in no way her sister.[48] In addition Selemeng had already been engaged to Moikabi (RraNtsono.)

According to Phuthegelo, Sechele desired Selemeng and sent Phuthegelo's father, Selemogo, and Nkane to abduct her from Moikabi's during a dance that was being held to celebrate her graduation from *bojale*. Willoughby, however, maintains that Sechele had been absent when MmaOpe died and, on his return, he found Selemeng already installed in her place through the efforts of her family.[49] Willoughby also states that this occurred at Tshonwane which, if true, would place it during or after 1842 that is well after Sechele's marriage to Mokgokgong. Whatever may have been the circumstances of her placement, it is clear that Selemeng was popularly accepted as Sechele's

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boy when he lived with the Moffats at Kudumane in 1852-55.

47. Following based on WCW/SO 739, notes on Sechele's wives; BNA PP 1/1/10 Phuthegelo, Gokatweng and Basutli; and interviews with S.G. Masimega, July 25, 1985; Majaasuma Matlabani and Ratlou Sebetlela, seperate interviews on Oct. 8, 1985.

48. BNA PP 1/1/10, Phuthegelo identifies MmaTseitsa who at one point is said to have stayed in the Sechele household as a sister to Kebalepile but in another interview he and Kalayamore identify her as Sechele' maternal aunt.

49. WCW/SO 739, notes on Sechele's wives.

queen. Her position of seniority was sanctioned at the time by the various village sections who opted for the daughter of a Son of Kgabo over the MoNgwato Mokgokgong. In this regard the ranking of the royal wives may be seen as further evidence that the community was the ultimate arbiter of dynastic matters.

Throughout the 1830's the still divided BaKwena lived in the shadow of the AmaNdebele state of Umzilagazi. Unable to resist his raiding regiments the BaKwena were frequently forced to shift their location.[50] At one point, according to Kgosidintsi, Sechele decided to comply with the Umzilagazi's summons that he and his people come and live under him.[51] But, upon learning of the fate that had befallen the Kgame faction, the BaKwena decided to turn back and maintain their precarious independence. In 1837 Umzilagazi, having for many years resisted incursions by southern Batswana and Griqua groups to his south, decided to abandon his base in what subsequently became the western Transvaal in the face the new challenge posed by the arrival of large organized parties of Boers participating in the Great Trek. The BaKwena took advantage of the AmaNdebele exodus by raiding their cattle.[52] In response the AmaNdebele, in 1842, launched a devastating counter-raid on the Bakwena at Shokwane, at a time when the two Bakwena factions had joined forces in an unsuccessful raid of their own against Sebego's BaNgwaketse.[53]

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50. Sechele himself made this point in his April 21, 1853 statement to the *Cape Mail*, reprinted in BPP Orange River Territory, 1854, (1758).

51. BPP C.4956, Kgosidintsi.

52. BPP C.4956, Kgosidintsi.

53. Raid recorded by David Livingstone, *Family Letters*, v.1 pp. 63-70; and various testimonies and notes in BNA PP 1/1/10; DCMol 4/14, and WCV/SO 739.

What proved to be the final AmaNdebele attack is significant for a number of reasons. For one thing it was during this raid that the BaNgwato pretender, Macheng, was captured by the AmaNdebele, a development that was to have a major impact on BaKwena-BaNgwato relations.[54] Of more immediate importance Sechele, in the wake of the raid and after regrouping his people for a season in the area around Thamaga, decided to remove his people eastward to Tshonwane in the country then dominated by Kgosi Mosielele of the Bakgatla bagaMmanaana. At the time Mosielele's town, Maanwane, was emerging as a center of white missionary and big game hunting activity largely due to the establishment of the London Missionary Society (LMS) station nearby at Maboutsa.

Part 2: Missionaries, Merchants, and Musketeers

The 1842 move to Tshonwane marks the end of the SeKwena era of the black ants and the beginning of the much longer era of the white or red ants. This epoch coincides with the tumultuous movement commanly referred to as The Great Trek. Who were the white ants? From a SeKwena perspective they were both *Makgoa*, whites in general but then sometimes specifically referring to those who were "English," and *Maburu*, Boers or modern Afrikaners and those Germans who worked with them. The SeKwena perception of the relationship between these two ethno-linguistic categories during the mid-nineteenth century is reflected in the following excerpt of a speech made by Kgosidintsi:

> "We have been told that the English is a wise nation. Ashu! What is wisdom? We have been told the English is a strong nation. They have driven their white Bushmen (ie. Boers) into our country to kill us. Is this strength? Have the English no cattle and slaves of their own that they send their Bushmen to take our cattle and our children to

54. WCW/SO 739, RraDaniel.

> sell? We are told that the English love all men. They give or sell ammunition, horses and guns to the Boers, who have red teeth, destroy us, and if we ask to buy powder, we get none. No, no, no! Black man must have no ammunition: they must serve the white man. Is their love? The English are not friends of the black man. If I am accusing the English or the Boers falsely, tell me!"[55]

While Kgosidintsi's words exemplify the racial polarization that was the byproduct of white colonial and settler expansionism, the circumstances in which his words were spoken underscore some of the ambiguities in race relations that had also emerged. The above passage was recorded by Robert Moffat, a prominent missionary, during a private meeting held in the mid-afternoon of Wednesday, November 22, 1854. Moffat's presence at this gathering was a reflection of his status, quite typical of many members of his profession, as a trusted advisor to the BaKwena on secular as well as spiritual affairs (earlier in the day he had baptized Selemang and her children including the crown prince, Sebele.) The get-together had been called by the Kgosi to assist him in responding to the latest correspondence that he had received through Jan Viljoen, the Boer Veld-Cornet responsible for the frontier between Kweneng and the Marico district. As part of his duties he regularly acted as a diplomatic emissary to Sechele. In 1854 a fragile armistice prevailed between these two groups, while each side negotiated for the return of their property, and in the BaKwena case persons, seized by the other party during their recent armed conflict.

In the historical literature, individuals such as Viljoen and Moffat have often been understood as personifications of two distinct and contradictory strands of white penetration into the interior, that of British "humanitarian" and Afrikaner

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55. Robert Moffat *The Matebele Journals of Robert Moffat* (edited by J.P.R. Wallis, 2 vols., Chatto & Windus, London 1945) vol. 1, appendix III, pp. 379-80.

"nationalist" imperialism. Many of the stereotypes associated with this presumed dicotomy between LMS missionaries and Boer commando leaders have naturally arisen as a result of the confrontations that did occur between them. Aside from these contradictions a much more complex drama was acted out in the theatre of the arms trade.

Both Viljoen and Moffat assisted the youthful Sechele in acquiring what he wanted most- firearms and ammunition. Moffat, along with his son-in-law, David Livingstone, who worked among the BaKwena from 1841 to 1853, assisted "English" traders who brought arms into the country and sold and repaired firearms themselves.[56] Beyond his official responsibilities, Viljoen was also well known to the BaKwena as one of the many hunter-traders who then frequented their country seeking ivory, ostrich feathers, and karosses. In exchange for both domestically provided gameproducts and hunting privileges to obtain additional supplies Viljoen, and other Boer hunters, also supplied the BaTswana with firearms and ammunition; this despite his responsibility as a Boer official to enforce laws prohibiting this traffic.[57]

For the traders like Viljoen the resale of game products from the interior was lucrative, a circumstance that tended to promote competition as well as cooperation among them. By the time of the meeting a few traders had already begun to strengthen their positions by settling among, and forging

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56. Much evidence of this aspect of Livingstone and Moffat's career can be found in Livingstone's *Family Letters* and Schapera (edit.) *David Livingstone South African Papers* (Van Riebeeck Society, Cape Town 1974.)

57. Viljoen participation in the gun trade is confirmed in Tvl. Arg., p. 260, declaration by P.D. du Preez and eleven others. Robert Moffat, *Private Journals*, vol 2- pp. 26, 121; and David Livingstone, *Missionary Correspondence 1841-1856*, (edited by Isaac Schapera, University of California Presa 1961) p. 222 (October 12, 1952 letter to William Thompson.)

marriage alliances with, the BaKwena. For his part the acquisition of arms had enabled Sechele to successfully lead a coalition of western BaTswana in armed resistance to Transvaal Boer aggression. Thus Sechele, Kgosidintsi, Moffat and others had gathered around the Kgosi's table to work out their response to Viljoen's latest communique. The meeting, in short, was part of a process of development characterized by interracial cooperation as well as subjugation, of armed conflict accompanied by negotiated peaceful coexistence all of which rested on the foundation of commerce in munitions. Throughout the mid-nineteenth century Sechele's state waxed by exploiting these contradictions. To understand the details of these developments one should begin with some understanding of the nature of nineteenth-century long distance trade and capitalist expansion within the region, a process already underway prior to the Tshowane move.

From early traveller's accounts, as well as local traditions and recent archeological evidence, it is clear that the BaKwena, along with neighboring communities, were integrated into an extensive regional trade network by the early nineteenth century.[58] William Burchell, when recounting his 1811-12 journey into the interior, drew attention to this fact by noting that the "Bakwin" along with the "Morutzi" (Bahurutshe) competed with the Koppersberg mines of Little

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58. Archeological evidence for Kgalagadi trade networks from c. 500 as well as nineteenth century evidence surveyed in Edwin Wilmsen *Land Filled with Flies* (University of Chicago Press, 1989) pp. 33-63. Articles examining aspects of pre-colonial BaKwena trade have previously been produced by Gary Okihiro- "Resistance and Accommadation: bakwena-baGasechele 1842-52" *Botswana Notes and Records* vol. 5 (1973) pp. 104-116 as well as Fanuel Nangati- "Early capitalist penetration: The impact of pre-colonial trade in Kweneng (1840-1876)" in *Settlement in Botswana*, pp. 140-47 and "Constraints on a Precolonial Economy. The Bakwena State c. 1820-1885," *Pula* vol. 2, no. 1 (February 1980), pp. 125-137.

Namaqualand as suppliers of copper to the South African markets.[59] At this time the BaKwena were probably on the periphery of trade routes terminating in the Portuguese coastal dominions of Angola and Mozambique to their north-west and north-east as well as south in the Cape Colony. As Okihiro has previously pointed out, John Campbell, Andrew Smith and Henry Methuen each found evidence of northerly BaKwena trade.[60] Campbell reported that the BaKwena obtained cloth "from white people who lived on the East Coast."[61] In his 1835 travels Smith observed that the BaKwena possessed white and red beads as well as other metal ornaments which they acquired through trade with the "Bakalaka" (BaKalanga/VaShona) in exchange for cattle.[62] Methuen also noted that Sechele wore beads, which he said he had purchased from "Maloquane" or "Baquapa" traders from the north. During his 1844 travels Methuen purchased "Portuguese beads" as well as some made of copper from the BaKwena.[63] From these and other early travellers' observations it is apparent that glass beads of non-indigenous manufacture were to be found among most, if not all, of the communities of Southern Africa at the time often providing a common basis for exchange. Methuen also discovered that the BaKwena sent ivory northward to "yellow men with long straight hair" whom he presumes to be Portuguese mulattos as well as the VaShona whom the BaKwena then described as "a tribe possessing guns."

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59. William Burchell *Travels in the Interior of Southern Africa*, 2 volumes (Batchworth Press, London, 1953 reprint of 1822/24 original), vol. 2 pp. 375, 399.
60. Gary Okihiro "Resistance and Accommodation," pp. 105-06
61. Campbell, vol. 2, pp. 358-59.
62. *Andrew Smith's Diary* vol. 2, pp. 193-94.
63. Henry Metheun *Life in the Wilderness, or Wanderings in South Africa* (Richard Bently, London, 1846) pp. 144-6, 199.

Regular trading links between the BaKwena and the European markets of the Cape may have been in existence by the mid-eighteenth century. According to both Livingstone and Sebele I, Motswasele I was the first Kgosi to inform the BaKwena of the whitemen.[64] By the time of Motswasele II the BaKwena were probably in regular contact with Griqua and "Oorlams" traders as well as occasional European fortune seekers and fugitives.[65] In addition to the 1808 Cowan and Donovan expedition, BaNgwato traditions about the period speak of one or more whitemen, variously remembered as Khoe, Kgowa, Mogale and/or Diphapha, active in the region.[66] At about the time of the Motswasele II western BaTswana are also reported to have traded with the Namaquas (Nama and Oorlams communities) along the Fish River of southern Namibia exchanging "their small axes" for cattle. These parties are also said to have worn cloth as well as karosses.[67] Trade with the South may have temporarily declined during the disruptions of the early nineteenth century but grew rapidly thereafter.

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64. Livingstone *Missionary Travels*, p.13. Sebele, p. 43

65. "Oorlams" is a Dutch/Afrikaans word which literally translates as "clever, knowing, smart, trained" etc. Use of the term in white South African historiography has often been ambiguous. It has commonly been applied manumitted and/or escaped slaves/servants and their descendents who are Afrikaans speaking and thus deemed to be "civilized" or, more generally, to any "black" or "brown" Afrikaans speakers. Oorlams communities existed on the South African frontier from the eighteenth century interacting with the BaTswana and other interior peoples.

66. WCW/SO 795. Also Edwin Lloyd *Three Great African Chiefs*, (T. Fisher Unwin, London 1895), p. 10. The Cape fugitive Coenrad de Buys is known to have operated in the area.

67. James Alexander *An Expedition of Discovery into the Interior of Africa, through the hitherto undiscribed countries of the Great Namaquas, Boschmans, and Hill Damaras* (2 volumes, 1967 C. Struik, Cape Town, limited edition facsimile reprint of 1838 original), vol. 2 p. 219 (I am grateful to Edwin Wilmsen for bringing this information to my attention.)

An early figure in the regional expansion of the trade in game products was David Hume, whose party had played a minor role in Sechele's restoration. After his c.1833 expedition he was able to gain direct access to the interior hunting grounds. Along with Robert Moffat, he also participated in the officially sponsored 1835 "Central African Expedition" of Andrew Smith to the BaKwena country and the court of Umzilagazi, which was a catalyst for, as well as consequence of, increased European interest in the interior's commercial potential. In 1838 Hume, himself, organized his own trading company, based at Moffat's mission settlement at Kudumane, and, by 1847, he had a certain Mr. Evans acting as his resident agent among the BaKwena.[68] Hume's success encouraged others. During one year, c.1843, he sold two thousand pounds of ivory, at 3s./6d. per pound, along with two hundred pounds of ostrich feathers, at *L* 5 1s. per pound, and upwards to two hundred karosses as well as other assorted curios at the Grahamstown Market.[69]

In addition to Smith's Central Africa Expedition, the growing interest of British authorities in the economic potential of the interior trade was reflected in the dispatch, in 1836, of two more exploratory parties under Captains William Harris and James Alexander. These latter junkets had as part of their mission the establishment direct commercial relations with "country of the Maquainas."[70] Harris successfully followed what was rapidly becoming the well established "Hunter's," "Trader's," or "Missionary's Road"

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68. Livingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 1 pp. 200-01.

69. Methuen, p. 91. Gordon Cumming, for the same market at approximately the same period, records similar figures of 4s.to 4s./6d. per pound for ivory, *L* 5 to *L* 6 per pound for ostrich feathers and *L* 1 to *L* 3 for karosses- R. Gordon Cumming *Five Years of a Hunter's Life in the Far Interior of South Africa*, (2 volumes, Harper & Bros., New York 1850) vol. 1 p. 23.

70. Alexander, vol. 2 p. 159.

through what is now eastern Botswana and the western Transvaal. Alexander, however, was frustrated in his attempt to find a well watered route across the Namib and Kgalagadi to the settlements of the Portuguese on the east coast."[71] The subsequent removal of the AmaNdebele to the VaShona country, following their defeat by a party of Voortrekkers, set the stage for new patterns of conflict and cooperation between the BaKwena and the growing swarm of white ants.

From 1842 to 1847 Sechele's settlement at Tshonwane was, along with the neighboring BaKgatla bagaMmanaana and BaHurutshe communities, strategicially located at the nexus of the missionary, hunter, and Voortrekker frontiers. In this location the *morafe* prospered, growing in numbers from about about 300 to over 2,000, roughly the strength of the BaKwena at the time of Motswasele II but only the threshhold of Sechele's statebuilding achievements.[72] An important development in this respect occurred in 1846 with the extension of Sechele's authority over most of the BooRathosa or BaKakana in the aftermath of the death of Bubi, who was still acting as the section's leader on behalf of Kgakge.[73] Bubi's men had been out shooting elephants and not having had

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71. Alexander, vol. 2 p. 159. In addition to his British commission Alexander was also a Lt.-Colonel in the Portuguese service.

72. In 1849 Livingston conducted a census of the BaKwena at Kolebeng counting 2,384 altogether as well as another 1,236 allied BaKaa: in J.J. Freeman *A Tour of South Africa* (John Snow, London, 1851) pp. 279-80. Livingston's figures would not have included members of "subject communities" living outside the town.

73. Detailed accounts of Bubi's death in Lingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 1 pp. 137-138; Cumming, vol. 1 pp. 234-35; BNA PP 1/1/10 Kalayamore, Phutegelo, Gokatweng; WCW/SO 739 Kgosidintsi; also short, uncriticle compilation of BaKwena historical traditions collected Louis Knobel, who grew up in Molepolole during the interwar years, published as "The History of Sechele" *Botswana Notes and Records* vol. 1 (1968), pp. 51-63: pp. 54-56.

any luck concluded that their gunpowder had been bewitched and needed to be doctored. Cumming claimed that he was responsible for supplying the powder but BaKwena traditions support Livingstone's account that at least some of the munitions came from Sechele, whom the BooRatshosa naturally believed to be the more likely agent of their misfortune. At any rate Bubi's herbalists inadvertently ignited the powder causing their rulers demise. From that point members of the BooRathosa, now under Kgakge, began defecting to Sechele. After some hesitation Sechele attacked and defeated the holdouts at Malakopi.[74] Kgakge and a few supporters fled to Mosielele, but most of his people now accepted Sechele's authority. In return for their allegiance the BooRathosa were allowed to exist as a separate section (*motse.*)

The growth of Sechele's town, following the reincorporation of the BooRathosa, can be attributed primarily to its development as a fortified refuge from Boer deprivations. The Mokwena began to welcome refugees, *baagedi* or "those who have been given a home." As Okihiro has previously pointed out, Sechele took advantage of this process to build up his personal following by placing the newcomer's households under his direct authority within Kgosing.[75] The *baagedi* were also often given loan cattle (*mafisa*) from the royal herd, which may account for the subsequent status of the Difetlhamelo kgotla as a court of appeal for other Kgosing

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74. Livingstone *Missionary Correspondence*, 90-91 and Robert Artwright *Sport and Service in South Africa, The Diary of Lieutenant Robert Artwright, 1843-46*, (edit. by Edward Tabler, Balkema, Cape Town, 1971) p. 41. Detailed account of the battle itself in BNA PP 1/1/10, Phuthegelo.

75. Okihiro, "Hunters, Herders, Cultivators and Traders," p. 24. Okihiro's thesis dovetails with data collected by Schapera *The Ethnic Composition of Tswana Tribes*, pp. 53-64 and Van Niekerk "Die administrations strutur," as well as the current structure of Molepolole.

groups.[76] Sechele's ability to attract refugees was predicated on his procurement of firearms and talent as a defensive strategist. In November of 1844 Gordon Cumming observed that the various sections or *metse* at Tshonwane were each "surrounded by an area inclosed with a strong impenetrable fence six feet in height."[77] He added:

> "A short time previous to my arrival, a rumor having reached Sichely that he was likely to be attacked by emigrant Boers, he suddenly resolved to secure his city with a wall of stones, which he at once commenced erecting. It was now completed, entirely surrounding the town, with loop-holes at intervals all along through which to play upon the advancing enemy with the muskets which he had resolved to purchase from hunters and traders like myself."[78]

By this time Sechele had already become a proficient marksman, earning praise name Rramokonopi, "Crack Shot."[79] Methuen wrote that, during his visit in September of 1844, Sechele, who at the time used a flint gun "of the rudest construction," pressed his guest to sell him a rifle equipped with a percussion cap. Not wishing to sell the gun, possibly out of fear of Boer reaction to the transfer of such an advanced weapon, he agreed to relinquish it only if Sechele could hit a distant target. In an attempt to assure the MoKwena's failure Methuen purposely overloaded the gun but Sechele, reportedly to the loud satisfaction of his people, hit his target.[80] Sechele was apparently quite fond of challenging visitors to such shooting contests. The unscrupulous Cumming took advantage of local "superstition" on one such occasion

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76. BNA S. 260/15/1, R.M. Mol. to R.C. May 4, 1936; and BNA S. 471 "Additional Report" by Van Niekerk, October 1943 p. 7; also Van Niekerk "Die administratione strutur," p. 41.
77. Cumming, vol. 2. p. 61
78. Cumming, vol. 2. p. 61.
79. Schapera, *Praise Poems*, pp. 132-33.
80. Metheun, p. 197 (Metheun welched on the deal.)

when he and Sechele, along with the Kgosi's brothers were wagering gunpowder for karosses.[81] Knowing that Griqua traders had passed through the area selling sulphur as "gun medicine" he retreated to his wagon before the firing commenced and proceeded to rub his hands with the substance. This act was reported to Sechele who was thus conned into a purchase to improve his sport.

The above example of naivete was not typical of Sechele's overall dealings with white fortune seekers. Contemporary observers are unanimous in their, often grudging, appreciation of his business acumen. Early, 1840s, impressions in this regard include those of Methuen, who found the Kgosi "displaying the utmost craft and greediness in his bargains," Artwright, who describes him as a "crafty and wily savage fond of bartering," and Alfred Dolman, who recorded that "I found him very crafty in dealing and by no means easy done."[82]

It is impossible to quantify the value to the BaKwena of such commerce. Initially the traders made considerable profits. Cumming claimed profits of over 3,000 per cent on a single transaction with the BaNgwato during his 1844 visit to their town. He calculated this return based on his acquiring ivory which he valued at upwards to *L* 30 be exchanged for a single

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81. Cumming, vol. 2 pp. 64-65, Upon learning of this antic Livingstone was reported by Cumming to be "very much shocked, declaring that in the future the natives would fail to believe him when he denounced supernatural agency, having now seen it in practiced by his own countryman." For his part Livingstone, *Family Letters*, vol. 1 pp. 217-18, also alleges Cumming's involvement in instances of murder, brutality and, vol. 2 p. 126, theft against Africans. Cumming, vol. 2 p. 169, gives his own version of the former incident.

82. Methuen, p. 198; Artwright, p. 76; and Alfred Dolman *In the Footsteps of Livingston* (Bodley Head, London, 1929) p. 199 (this is a posthumous publication of his journals.)

musket which he purchased at *L* 16 for a case of twenty.[83] But such insights into the terms of trade are limited to the traders perspective and fail to take into account local estimates of utility and cost. Tusks held little value in their areas of supply while guns, whose true value was affected by their often "contraband" quality, were in high demand. As Okihiro and Nangati note BaKwena trading during the mid-nineteenth century was primarily motivated by the need to resist Boer encroachment.[84] Nor were the terms of trade static. By 1850 Livingstone reported that the traders J.H. Wilson and Sam Edwards, then the leading Kweneng traders, "gave a gun for a kaross or a cow elephant's tusk," which dovetales with information, later supplied to Jules Ellenberger by BaTawana informants, that: "At the time Lesolathebe was at Mosiara the price paid for gun and its ammunition was one elephant tusk."[85] By this time Sechele had even begun to establish, through his missionaries, communication with arms manufacturers in London. In 1849 he sent a leopard skin kaross to the firm of Parker, Tipping & Lawden in appreciation of his newly arrived double barrel gun.[86] In addition it is clear that the nature of the arms trade helped assure that much of it went unreported. Guns, along with European textiles and other imported goods, began to proliferate among BaKwena. In October of 1847 Livingstone noted a SeKwena ceremony in which "about 80 guns" were charmed in preparation for possible

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83. Cumming, vol. 1 p. 279. Cumming's terms of trade along with those of the trader J.H. Wilson also discussed by Livingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 2 p. 151.

84. Okihiro "Resistance and Accommodation;" and Nangati "Constraints on a Precolonial Economy," Nangati goes too far, however, in his characterization of BaKwena trade in such terms for the entire period from c. 1820-1885.

85. Livingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 2 p. 92. PRO CO 879/91/802 RC to HC, July 18, 1906 enclosing notes "given by old people of the Batawana Tribe, in June, 1906, to Mr. J. Ellenberger."

86. Livingstone, *Family Letters*, vol. 2 p. 48.

87. Livingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 1 p. 221.

warfare with the Boers.[87] A decade later William Baldwin reported of them: "They are an independent lot of Kaffirs, and have no end of guns."[88] Sechele, particularly during the early years of his reign, usually acted as the principal interlocutor in these transactions, a fact which certainly enhanced both his personal and institutional status.

One factor in the commercial growth of the BaKwena settlements at Tshonwane and, subsequently from 1847-52, Kolobeng-Dimawe as commercial centers, in addition to their favourable location and the talents of Sechele, was the presence of Livingstone, whose African career began and in many respects was shaped by his experiences with the *morafe*. As Livingstone, himself, later wrote: "Wherever a missionary lives, traders are sure to come; they are mutually dependent, and each aids the other."[89] In his own case the relationship was intimate indeed. His own writings as well as those of his merchantile acquaintances, refer to numerous instances in which he rendered services to the local trading community in keeping with his emerging faith in the trinity of Christianity, Commerce and Civilization. His much publicised 1849 "discovery," along with William Oswell, Mungo Murray, J.H. Wilson and a party of BaKwena led by RamotLobi, of Lake Ngami is particularly notable in that it became, as the good Doctor had intended, a powerful impetus for the further expansion of colonial commerce towards central Africa.

The Lake Ngami expedition was very much an indigenous enterprize. Kgosi Letsholathebe of the BaTawana in Ngamiland had, in fact, sent emissaries to Sechele to encourage the

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88. William Baldwin *African Hunting, From Natal to the Zambesi*, (Richard Bentley, London, 1863) p. 175
89. Livingstone *Missionary Travels*, p. 28.

Europeans to make their discovery.[90] Both diKgosi appear to have grasped the opportunity to strengthen their mutual positions by directly linking the rich hunting grounds of Ngamiland with the trade centers of Kweneng.[91] Ramothobi, who like many BaKwena was familiar with the route, acted as the guide throughout the journey. Sechele, who had already made the journey two years earlier, initially had intended to lead the party, but was forced to stay behind due to new, in the end unrealized, rumors of a impending Boer attack.[92] During the following year he did accompany Livingstone on a follow up journey. After this second expedition Livingstone was invited by the then elderly Sebetwane to also visit his country in the Chobe-Zambezi region adjacent to Mosi-wa-tunya, which the missionary publicised as the "Victoria Falls." As an enticement the BaKololo leader sent out three parties of emissaries with 13 black cows for Sechele along with 13 brown cows for Letsholathebe and 13 white cows for Sekgoma (of the BaNgwato) in order to win their backing for the project.[93] Through such agencies was the legendary career of the most eminent of the Victorian era's explorers launched.

Livingstone, the promoter of commerce and repairer of guns as well as human bodies and souls, also made a sincere and profound contribution to the Bakwena as a teacher of religion. Sechele was the missonary's most important, if not the only, convert. During their first encounter Sechele earned Livingstone's respect with his intellectual curiosity when he enquired "Since it is true that all who die unforgiven are

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90. Livingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 2 pp. 44, 50-51, 64.

91. See Tlou *A History of Ngamiland*, chapter 6- pp. 63-72; and "A Political History of Northeastern Botswana," pp. 171-72; for interpretation of Letsholathebe's motives as well as local impact on the BaTawana.

92. PRO CO 897/91/802, notes collectad by J. Ellenberger, June 1906. Livingston *Travels*, p. 46. Background of scare detailed by Schapera in *South African Papers*, pp. 21-25.

93. Livingstone *Missionary Travels*, p. 58.

lost forever, why did your nation not come and tell us of it before now? My ancestors are gone,& none of them knew anything of what you tell me. How is this?"[94] An invitation to Livingstone to settle among the BaKwena was subsequently agreed upon by the Kgotla. At the same meeting the regiments (*mephato*) were mobilized to build a church/school thus initiating a tradition of public construction of "tribal churches" that would last through the 1950s.[95]

Within two days of the meeting Sechele was reported to have "acquired a perfect knowledge of the large & small alphabets" and thereafter he made rapid progress towards literacy. With tutoring by the explorer William Oswell he also quickly mastered arithmetic.[96] The following year Botswana's first *moruti* (SeTswana for teacher and/or religious minister) wrote of his star pupil: "In desire for general information, and assiduity in reading, he surpasses all the chiefs except Waterboer with whom I have come in contact."[97] Sechele encouraged others to follow his example and by 1847 it was reported that "Most of the principal men attempt to acquire a knowledge of reading" while the Kgosi's adoption of European clothing and purchases of such materials as mattresses, soap, tables, and lanterns were seen by Livingstone as further evidence of his being "most desirous of making progress in civilization."[98] The only subject that Sechele failed to master

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94. Livingstone *Missionary Correspondence*, p. 36. Livingstone wrote "I thought immediately of the guilt of the church, but did not confess."

95. Livingstone *Missionary Correspondence*, p. 80

96. Elizabeth Price *The Journals of Elizabeth Price* (edited by Una Long, Edwin Arnold, London, 1956) p. 377.

97. Livingstone *Missionary Correspondence*, p. 91. Andries Waterboer was prominent as the Captain of Griquatown from 1820 to 1852.

98. Livingstone *Missionary Correspondence*, pp. 104, 113. Sechele had adopted "European" attire of his own volition prior to Livingstone's arrival- Methuen, p. 202.

was English.[99]

Beyond introducing literacy and other attributes of book learning, the educational efforts of Livingstone and Sechele opened the door for the eventual spread of the Christian faith and ideology into what is now Botswana. In this regard Sechele's own celebrated conversion had important implications for the secular as well as spiritual state of his polity. The stage was set for the Kgosi's baptism in August of 1848 when he agreed to the pre-condition that he become monogamous by abandoning all but one of his wives.[100] At the time he had at least five wives including his reputed favorite Mokgokong and his great wife Selemeng. Selemeng became Sechele's "Christian wife" a development which, along with her and her children's subsequent baptisms, would help to consolidate her household's position of seniority.

Sechele's initiative was met with hostility from most of his followers. In addition to the disgruntlement of the families whose daughters were to be sent home, his conversion compromised his spiritual role as the initiator of regiments, rainmaker, and practicioner, as well as regulater, of other forms of medicine, magic, and ritual on behalf of the *morafe*. The day after his decision all of the women of Kolobeng remained in their homes, instead of tending to their gardens, in protest. The men of the community meanwhile met angrily in the Kgotla in a weeklong attempt to convince the son of

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99. Livingstone *Missionary Correspondence*, p.152.

100. Livingstone *Private Journal*, p. 298. Evidence of frequency of polygamy among BaTswana at the time can be found in Livingstone's 1849 census of the BaKaa, who in the same year joined the BaKwena as "junior allies" living under Sechele's overrule, of a total of 1236 Bakaa 361 were men over the age of fourteen. Of these 2 had four wives, 25 had three wives, 94 had 2 wives, 157 were monogamous and another 83 were unmarried. There were 423 "women", 255 "girls", and 197 "boys" (ie. below fourteen) reported- J.J. Freeman, pp. 279-80.

101. Livingstone *Private Journals*, pp. 298-99.

Modimowagae to alter his decision.[101] The degree of bitterness which was voiced during the first session surprized the Kgosi who, on the following day, challenged his subjects to execute him immediatly if that was their wish. This dare was was not taken up but a special *pitso* was called in a vain attempt to intimidate him. During this meeting the ever loyal Segakisa offered to give up his wives too, but the majority strongly pressed Sechele to keep his. The crisis even reached beyond the *morafe's* borders. Livingstone wrote to Moffat that Khosi Moshoeshoe the (MoKwena) monarch of the BaSotho had sent Sechele ten cattle and two horses with the private message:

> "that whatever he wished, whether guns gunpowder horses or cattle, he must apply to him and he would supply them; & and tell him to allow his people to believe as they like, but he (Sechele) must never believe. 'I am a king', said Moshesh, '& I won't put myself under the authority of another (viz. God); I have a kingdom as well as He, & people would laugh at me if I believed and put myself the power of another. Tell Sechele that."[102]

Despite the protests and advice of others, as well as the onset of severe drought, which put him under great pressure to perform his rainmaking responsibilities, the Kgosi was baptized in October of 1848.[103] An important compromise was reached that allowed Sechele to transfer his duties over such matters as initiation to Kgosidintsi, thereby delegating his responsibilities of *bogosi* in an apparently unprecedented way.[104] During the lifetimes of the two siblings this constitutional arrangement seems to have functioned smoothly. Despite Sechele's early suspension from communion by

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102. Livingston *Family Letters*, p. 260.

103. The event was written up by Livingstone in *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* vol. 13 (August 1849), pp. 115-116. Additional details in Livingstone's other correspondence of the period.

104. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kgwadira Lesele; WCW/SO 382; and 739, Kgabo Tebele. Schapera, *Ditirafalo*, pp. 55-56. Interview w/Mokgothusile Kgabo, Aug. 14, 1985.

Livingstone, in April of 1849, after his "former wife" Mokgokong became pregnant by him, he remained the leader of the local church, frequently giving sermons and otherwise leading Sunday services.[104] Perhaps taking the fifth commandment to heart, he had the wall of his chapel, opposite the pulpit, adorned with the names of his forefathers. The cognomens were listed according to genealogical descent along a line five to six yards across that terminated with his own name painted double the size of the rest.[105]

Sechele's Christianity, despite the common opinion among the L.M.S. missionaries that he was "hopelessly entangled in the heathenism of his country," cannot be simply explained as either a clever strategy or a form of vanity on his part.[107] His devotion was a consistent and significant part of his life. In keeping with his general character and intellect, he approached his new faith with an open, creative mind, what one later missionary saw as evidence of his "double souled heart."[108] Many accounts testify to his deep knowledge of the

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105. Sechele's suspension lasted until just before his death in 1892- "New Church at Molepolole" *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* June 1891 pp. 188-190. Mokgokong after the incident returned to the BaNgwato and was remarried to a man named Motoi.

106. R. Moffat *Matebele Journals*, vol. 2 p. 33. Sechele later removed the names after Moffat objected to them.

107. "Death of Two African Chiefs" *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* (January 1893.)

108. Edwin Smith "Retrospect: Sechele, the double-souled Chief of the Bakwena" in *Great Lion of Bechuanaland: The Life and Times of Rodger Price*, (London Missionary Society 1957) pp. 149-172. For rebuttal see Mutero Chirenje *A History of Northern Botswana (Associated Univ. Presses, Cranbury, New Jersey & London 1977.) p. 47 (first three chapter's, pp. 27-122, contain a good overview of BaTswana response to early missionary activity.)*

scriptures.[109] He quoted the book constantly, a habit that caused another convert to remark "because Sechele mixes up God's things with his own he thinks he is incapable of erring."[110] Sechele was quite capable of holding his own in periodic debates with the missionaries. His Sunday afternoons, after dinner and between services, were often given over to informal gatherings held at his home in which Biblical discussion was the chief topic of conversation.[111]

Like many African converts Sechele became particularly devoted to biblical passages that offered justifications for many of his people's traditional practices. As underscored by such allegedly pre-Christian SeTswana proverbs as "*Mmangwana o tshwara thipa kafa bogaleng*: The mother of the child is the one who catches the knife by the blade's edge," the social values of the Old Testment Hebrews, rooted as they were in a similar agro-pastoral mode of production, contained many parallels to those of the BaKwena.[112] It is therefore not surprizing that the Kgosi should have reportedly sought to emulate King David and, more especially, Solomon.[113] Identification with the testements affected, or at least

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109. This trait became something of a dynastic tradition: on one occasion when Sechele tried to discourage one of his sons from attending bogwera the boy quoted Romans, chapter two, verse twenty-five: "For circumcision indeed profitith, if you be a doer of the law."- Elizabeth Price, p. 261.

110. Elizabeth Price, p. 180.

111. "Death of Two African Chiefs." Descriptions of various Sunday gatherings at the Sechele's can also be found in Elizabeth Price's diaries and Edwin Smith *Great Lion*.

112. The proverb is from the SeTswana tale of "The King's Law," which is almost exactly the same as "The Judgement of Solomon." Sol Plaatje, citing unidentified "pioneer missionaries," insists that the story predates the SeTswana Bible- Solomon Plaatje & Daniel Jones *A Sechuana Reader* (Univ. of London Press, 1916) pp. 14-17.

113. "Death of Two African Chiefs;" *The Journals of Elizabeth Price*, p. 271, Mrs. Price was given one of Sechele's personally annotated Bibles; and Edwin Smith *Great Lion*, p. 183.

provided justifications for, some of the Kgosi's judicial and social pronouncements. Among the most dramatic examples of his neo-biblical justice was the well known case in which his daughter, Gagoangwe, was brought before him for poking out the eye of one of her MoKgalagadi servants with a stick. Sechele, invoking "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," allowed the servant to avenge herself by blinding one of Gagoangwe's eyes. By so doing he established the precedent that even the most humble in society should be protected from arbitrary cruelty.[114] The local, Bible reading, intellegentsia would also have been cognizant that implicit in the judgement was the notion that the BaKgalagadi were not "slaves."[115]

Another innovation was the mandatory observance of the Sunday sabbath as a day of rest in which various activities such as traveling by wagon were proscribed. A byproduct of this development, which by the 1920's had come to be accepted as a well established SeKwena custom, was the local introduction of the week as a concept of time.[116] By the 1860's the German traveller Gustav Fritsch spoke of entire communties in southern Botswana setting aside their weekly toil: "The vain blacks view Sunday's dressing up as the essential part of their religion and promenade throughout the day. At various times they gather at specific places in the

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114. Schapera *Ditirafalo*, pp. 56-57. The story of Gagoangwe's blinding was first related to me by her great-nephew Kgosi Letlole Mosielele, interviewed July 13, 1985, and subsequently resurfaced in many of my other interviews. According to Mrs. Victoria Namane (who was raised by Gagoangwe), interviewed January 1986, the famous "one eyed queen" used the example of her own punishment to insist that the British not commute the death sentence passed against her son Moyapitso for the 1916 assasaination of his brother, Kgosi Seepapitso II of BaNgwaketse.

115. *Exodus* chapter 21, verses 23-27, 26: "(But) When a man strikes his slave or slave-girl in the eye and destroy it, he shall let the slave go free in compensation of the eye."

116. See BNA DCMol. 4/16 for application of law in 1926.

Kgotla or in one of the larger huts they call churches where, in communities without priests, native preachers or the Chief, himself, address the community and where psalms are sung."[117]

While sowing the seeds of Christianity was a significant legacy of Livingstone's labors among the BaKwena, given the importance of the faith in shaping subsequent social and political developments, during the missionary's residence the new religion remained confined to the immediate royal family and a few of their dependents. The value of other major innovations introduced by the doctor such as dam building, irrigation and the introduction of the plough also become apparent after his departure, while his talents in medicine, although respected, did not set him radically apart from the other *dingaka* of the community.[118] At the time and for many years thereafter the missionary's reputation among the BaKwena rested on his support for their cause of resisting Boer slavery. Kgosidintsi, speaking to General Warren in 1885, said of Livingstone: "I asked him to go and find out what they (the Boers) wanted. He said, 'They will certainly attack you, so you must get guns and defend yourselves.'"[119]

The BaKwena did not need Livingstone to either appreciate the threat of the Boers or the value of guns. It was the *moruti's* contributions as technical advisor and propagandist that were most valued. His belief in a moral imperative to transcend mere condemnation by actively deterring evil, in particular the evil of slavery, has not been generally appreciated. This is due to the fact that he, and his many biographers, largely succeeded in doing an artful job

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117. Fritsch, *Drie Jahre*, p. 325.
118. References to ploughs (indexed) in Livingstone *Family Letters*. For Sechele's own eclectic approach to medicine see E. Price, p. 368. Also Fritsch, *Drie Jahre*, pp. 308-09.
119. BPP C.4588 "Interview between Sir C. Warren and Chief Sechele of Bakwena at Court Yard, Molepolole, April 27, 1885."

of covering it up. As Schapera has pointed out the missionary's many contemporary denials of Boer charges that he helped furnish Sechele with arms were, to put it mildly, disingenuous.[120]

Livingstone may have been innocent of the Boer allegation that he supplied Sechele with a cannon, but Sechele certainly acquired one.[121] He, along with his father-in-law Robert Moffat, is known to have attempted to supply the BaKwena with a special seven-barreled gun.[122] His own letters also confirm that he helped to introduce arms into Kweneng along with some of the tools and expertise needed to maintain the local arsenal and to domestically produce finely molded bullets.[123] These admissions largely substantiate Pieter Scholtz charge, subsequently echoed by his adjutant, Paul Kruger, that he found a small arms factory at Livingstone's mission compound:

> "we found several half-finished guns and a gunmaker's shop with abundance of tools. We here found more guns and tools than Bibles, so that the

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120. Schapera in his introduction to Livingstone *Family Letters*, p. 12; and *South African Papers*, pp. 41-42.

121. In a letter to the Pieter Scholtz, Sechele reportedly wrote: "I am provided with cannon"- Contained in the "Official Report of the Acting Commandant-General, P.E. Scholtz, Esq." (undated) on the August 1852 attack on Kolobeng: Dutch/Afrikaans original: S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 2, pp. 363-366, and English version, from *Zuid-Oost Afrikaan*, in William Holden's *History of the Colony of Natal, South Africa* (C. Struik, Cape Town, 1963 facsimile reprint of 1855 original) p. 381. Later, while discussing Boer casualties after the attack, Sechele is reported to have "brought out some leaden cannon balls and smiled rather contemptuously."- James Chapman *Travels in the Interior of Africa, 1846-1863*, (two volume: A.A. Balkema, Cape Town 1971, reprint of 1868 original) vol. 1 p. 82. Also, in 1880, Elizabeth Price recorded her annoyance at Sechele's sons firing "the cannon"- Elizabeth Price, p. 390. The cannon is said to currently be at the Mafikeng Museum.

122. Livingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 2, p. 91.

123. Livingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 1 pp. 262, vol. 2 pp. 47, 80, 91.

> place had more the appearance of a gunmaker's shop than a mission station, and more a smuggling-shop than a school place."[124]

Although many of the guns allegedly found at Kolobeng could have been the property of other traders, who were in the habit of using the mission as a depot, there can be little doubt that Livingstone thought of himself as a literal Christian soldier. The following is a excerpt from a letter addressed to his parents and sisters in July of 1850:[125]

> "Resistance to such tyrants and murderers (ie. the Boers) is I think obedience to God, and Charles will I have no doubt enlighten you on the point. The only means which with the divine blessing have preserved our independence as a people are those very guns which you think the people would have been better without. The tribe would never have enjoyed the gospel but for firearms. The moral suasion of their presence here goes a great way with the Boers. I am thankful for it. No one has ever been killed by them; they are just like the painted guns you see on some ships and called by sailor 'Quakers' (ie. dummy cannon.)"[126]

The Great Trek was a seminal event in the history of the black Africans as well as white Afrikaners. During the mid-nineteenth century the Voortrekkers imposed land and labor policies that altered the social, economic, political, and demographic status quo within their, extensive, areas of settlement. As with all white settler societies on the

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124. Scholtz report(s) in S.A. Arg. Tvl., p. 366; and Holden, p. 383. BNA BNB 2443 "Bloemhof Commission of 1871, Report & Evidence," evidence of Kruger, May 31, 1871; and *The Memiors of Paul Kruger* (edit. A. Schowalter, 2 vols., Unwin, London 1902) vol. 1, pp. 44.

125. The use of the Kolobeng mission as a commercial depot is well established and was even cited by Livingstone himself as a reason for the Boer raid in the missionary's representation to HMG following the attack- BPP C.1646: Livingstone to Secretary of State for Colonies, December 12, 1852 (via LMS Secretary Arthur Tidman.)

126. Livingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 2, p. 95. (Charles was a brother of David's.)

continent, they established their local hegemony through the alienation of black African land, expropriation of black African property, and coercion of black African labor. From the moment of their arrival on the Highveld the Voortrekkers asserted that they were the conquering successors of Umzilagazi's state who had thus collectively inherited his supposed absolute title to the land. Alleged AmaNdebele exactions were also invoked to legitimize the Boer practice of coercing labor from the indigenous communities. Much of this forced labor took the form of temporary impositions, the Labor Tax. There also emerged a class of defacto slaves. This latter group was made up almost exclusively of women and children who had been seized during commando raids and brought up in a state of servile dependency. The children were labled as *inboekselings* from the Afrikaans word for indenture, *inboek*. *Inboekseling* has often been euphimistically mistranslated as as "apprentice," a word which in much of the white historiography of South Africa still masks the true nature of the servitude.[127]

Initially contacts between Sechele and the Boers were cordial. Shortly after their settlement at Tshowane the BaKwena were visited by members of Hendrik Potgieter's Voortrekker community who bartered cattle for ivory. At the

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127. The general subject of forced labor in the Boer republics as well the specific social institution of *inboekselings* has been virtually ignored by contemporary scholars. Two recent studies focus on the social role of ex-*inboekselings*: Peter Delius and Stanley Trapido "Inboekselings and Oorlams: The Creation and Tranformation of a Servile Class," in B. Bozzoli, ed., *Town and Countryside in the Transvaal: Capitalist Penetration and Populist Response* (Ravan, Johannesburg, 1983 pp. 53-81) and Fred Morton "Manumitted Slaves and the Dutch Reformed Church Mission in the Western Transvaal and Eastern Bechuanaland at the time of the Colonization of Southern Africa, 1864 to 1914" (draft paper tabled at the Symposium "Manumission: the Promise of Freedom" held at the Twelfth International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, Zagreb, 28th of July 1988.)

time it was also agreed that some BaKwena could be hired to work for the Boers.[128] As the increasing numbers of Boers settled throughout the Transvaal during the 1840's their demand for black labor grew and became coercive. The senior branch of the BaKwena, BaKwena bagaMagopa, who had initially exchanged services for cattle, were, within a few years, forced to provide uncompensated labor to the white immigrants. This process ultimately resulted in their Kgosi, Mmamogale, fleeing to the protection of Moshoeshoe.[129] While Sechele accumulated his arsenal one *morafe* after another to his east was similarly subjugated.

Part 3: The Boer War

A few years ago a report on Mosopa village, in the Southern District of Botswana, mistakenly concluded that the settlement had been founded sometime in the early twentieth century.[130] This assumption of the communities' "relatively recent origin" was based on oral testimony by local elders that their village had been built in the aftermath of the "Boer War," which in South African history closed with the 1902 Treaty of Vereeniging. What the researchers failed to appreciate was that their sources were referring to Botswana's Boer War. Unfortunately this minor oversight is indicative of a general lack of awareness among the modern citizens of Botswana about the conflict that, in the context of subsequent developments, can be seen as an opening chapter in their country's long struggle for national independence. Since the turn of this century BaTswana have been educated to link

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128. April 21, 1853 statement by Sechele to the *Cape Mail* reprinted in BPP (1854) c.1758.

129. Neil Parsons *A New History of Southern Africa* (Holmes & Meier Publishers, New York, 1983) p. 112.

130. BNA BNB 1917- D.F. Eding, A.A.J. Udo and M.S.P. Sekgoma *Report on village studies: Moshupa, Molepolole, Manyana* (Ministry of Agriculture, Gaborone, 1972) pp. 75, 88.

their freedom from Boer rule solely to the grace of British "protection." Obscured has been any reference to the fact that some of their ancestors had fought to establish what has since remained Botswana's eastern border. The BaTswana-Boer War of 1852-53 also served to radically alter the demography of south-eastern Botswana.

Heretofore most of what little has been written about the events surrounding resistance to the Boer invasion of 1852 has come to us as either an episode in the career of David Livingstone, who was in fact in Cape Town when the fighting occurred, or as a minor incident in the early history of the Afrikaner *volk*. Just as the American War of Independence was part of, yet distinct from, the imperial histories of eighteenth century Britain and France, so is there a limit in casting Botswana's struggles as mere footnotes in the annals of others.

The War grew out of escalating tensions between Sechele and the authorities of the nascent Transvaal state who, by 1844, were demanding that he either give up his guns and submit to their authority or face reprisals.[131] In 1846 the the wagons of one trader, Joseph McCabe, were confiscated for carrying arms to to Sechele.[132] At the time Livingstone claimed credit for persuading the Boers not to carry out their threat to disarm the BaKwena.[133] But by 1849 Boer mistrust of Livingstone's own role led to their calls for his ouster.[134] Their concerns about Sechele and his missionary were further heightened by the widely publicised Lake Ngami expedition. To counter the prospect of further uncontrolled trade between the

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131. Cumming, vol. 2, p.61.
132. S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 1, pp. 39-40, 57. Vrt. Arg. pp. 236, 240-42.
133. Livingstone *Missionary Correspondence*, pp. 95-96.
134. Relevant correspondence on this episode collected by Schapera in *South African Papers*, pp. 21-48, 126-29.

Cape Colony and the BaTswana, the Boer Commandant for the western Transvaal, Adriaan Standers, c.July of 1850, "sent an order to Sechele to stop all English travellers and traders proceeding North."[135] By then Standers was turning back travellers enroute to Kolobeng and had arrested McCabe for publishing his account of the Lake journey.[136] This led to futile calls on the part of the British Resident at Bloemfontein that the area north of the Vaal river be annexed. For his part Sechele, in apparent retaliation, prevented two Boer parties from passing through his own country.[137] In December of 1850 he further refused to accept the Boer demand that he sign a treaty of "peace and friendship" that would have made his people liable for their Labor Tax.[138]

In April of 1851 the then supreme military leader of the Transvaal, Commandant-General Andries Pretorius, concluded that Sechele would have to be disarmed but, noting that it would no longer be an easy operation, called for caution and consultations with the British.[139] In July, his War Council (*Krijgsraad*) authorized spying on the BaKwena, while they continued to press the Kgosi to come to terms.[140] New ultimatums were also forwarded to all of the diKgosi between Sechele and the Madikwe river, who up until then had been able to maintain their autonomy, calling on them to supply labor.[141] The most prominent Kgosi in the area, Mosielele, reportedly favored resistance but, in October 1851, when the

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135. Livingstone *Family Letters*, pp. 88-89.
136. BPP (1851) c.1360. Holden, pp. 413-34.
137. S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 1, pp. 130, 296; and vol. 2, pp. 36, 214, 237.
138. J. Leyland *Adventure in the Far Interior of South Africa*, (C. Stuick, Cape Town, 1972 facsimile reprint of 1866 original) pp. 112-13.
139. S. A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 2, pp. 214-15.
140. S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 2, pp. 36-37, 87.
141. Leyland pp. 206-09. Chapman, p. 82. R. Edwards in *South African Papers*, pp. 133-34.

various dikgosi along with some of their missionaries met at his center, Maanwane, the discussion centered around the possibility of a large-scale exodus. During the same week Standers, with eighty-two men, forced the BaKgatla ruler to give up a party of BaHurutse who had sought refuge in his country and surrender laborers. The Boers had intended to follow up this attack with a larger move on Kolobeng but had to be abandon their plan due to severe drought.[142] Meanwhile Sechele followed Kgosidintsi's lead in moving most of his people about fifteen kilometers south of Kolobeng to the more defensible, as well as better watered, slopes around Dimawe hill.

In January of 1852 Andries Pretorius and the British commissioners William Hogge and Charles Owen signed the Sand River Convention. The agreement provided that the British would accept the defacto independence of the Transvaal Boers, cooperate with them in suppressing the sale of arms and ammunition to black African states, and renounce any understandings which existed between Britain and said entities. In return Pretorius guaranteed free trade for British commerce and the suppression of slavery in his territory.[143] The Transvaal Boers were further strengthened internally by the reconciliation between members of the rival Potgieter and Pretorius clans who had long competed for leadership.[144] Under Pretorius's supreme leadership they moved rapidly to consolidate their hegemony over the BaTswana living along their western border. In February Standers, in violation of earlier assurances, called upon Mosielele to supply more men

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142. S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 2, pp. 237.

143. Text and correspondence relating to the convention in BPP (1852-53) c.1646. The agreement was never formally ratified as a treaty by the U.K. although as an understanding its provisions were upheld.

144. Agar-Hamilton *The Native Policy of the Voortrekkers*, (Maskew Miller, Cape Town 1928) p. 73.

for an irrigation project. When Mosielele failed to appear before him he called for a commando to be assembled to shoot the errant Kgosi. But a number of the Boers objected to this, leading to Standers resignation in favor of Pieter Scholtz.

One of Scholtz's first actions was to summon all of the diKgosi along his frontier to a meeting, held at Maanwane/Mabotsa on the 25th of February, for the purpose of demonstrating their submission. Sechele refused to attend.[145] In the austral winter of 1852 Scholtz began to assemble a large commando. All of the diKgosi were once more summoned to a meeting on July 31, "to hear the law" and provide auxiliaries for the expedition.[146] Mosielele, encouraged it is said by the gift of ammunition from Sechele and the belief that the Boers had become seriously weakened due to losses from fever, had already refused to deliver any more of his people, thus inviting retribution.[147] On August 17, 1852 Scholtz's force of some 430 Boer horsemen and a slightly larger number of BaTswana auxiliaries advanced on Mosielele, who fled with most of his people to Sechele at Dimawe.[148]

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145. Edwards in Schapera *South African Papers*, p. 135-38. Also Sechele's statement to the *Cape Town Mail* in BPP (1854) C.1758; and letter to Moffat, in Livingstone *Private Journals*, pp. 85-90 (original and translations, a version of the letter was first published in *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* vol. 17 (1853), p. 34.)

146. Chapman, p. 82. BPP (1854) C.1758, letter by Joseph Ludorf, Oct. 16, 1852, Molito. Edwards in Schapera *South African Papers*, p. 138.

147. LMS William Inglis, in a report to his Directors, June 10, 1852 (published in Schapera *South African Papers*, p. 172.)

148. Edwards in Schapera *South African Papers*, pp. 139-40. LMS Inglis to Directors, Oct. 16, 1852. BaKgatla bagaMmanaana accounts in BNA S 155/8,10 (testimony in 1930's inquiries); PP 1/2/5 & 8, (testimony collected by Schapera); and Interview at Mosopa Kgotla, August 13, 1985, w/ Kgosi Ramputswa, Mose Mose, K. Kowa and (Mrs.) Mookgodi, and N. Basimanebotlhe. Further sources on auxiliaries- Livingstone *Family Letters*, vol. 2. p. 87, who writes of 700 auxiliaries; "Veritus," in Holden, pp. 384-86, says the Boers had "six hundred subjugated Kafirs, of the Bakonni tribe, occupying the country eastward of Moriga"

In the days that followed Scholtz's men brought death and destruction to the hills and valleys around Maanwane/Maboutsa by preying upon those BaKgatla who had remained behind, who are said to have included many elderly, as well as the exile BaKwena party of Kgakge. In the process the Boers killed somewhere between nine and ninety people.[149] Many woman and children were also captured to serve as *inboekselings*.[150] Elsewhere diKgosi Mangope, of the BaHurutshe booManyana, and Bogatswe, possibly of a BaTlokwa faction, were taken as prisoners, while further to the south Barolong booRatshidi of Kgosi Montsiwa, then settled at Lotlhakane, were threatened for their refusal to supply auxliaries.[151] Scholtz decided that the BaRolong's punishment would have to await that of the BaKwena.

At the time of its invasion of Kweneng the Transvaal Boer State, after 1849 the South African Republic (SAR,) was still a loose *maatschappy* or community confederation whose structure in this respect, at least superficially, mirrored that of the emerging BaKwena led alliance along its western

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with them. Also BNA PP 1/1/11 Morebodi, on recruitment of BaHurutshe.

149. The high figure by Chapman, vol. 1, p. 82; which supported by "Veritas," Holden, p. 385; and Ludorf, BPP (1854) c.1758. LMS: W. Ashton, Sept. 25, 1852, states sixty were killed; while Inglis, Oct. 16, 1852, states "6 or 7 men were shot & 3 women." Scholtz's report simply states "I ordered a few shots to be fired upon them".

150. BPP (1852-53) c.1646. Letter Messrs. Edwards and Inglis to Mr. P.E. Scholtz, August 11, 1852; BPP (1854) c.1758. October 16, 1852 letter of Joseph Ludorf.

151. BPP (1854) c.1758. Ludorf letter; also Dr. S.M. Molema *Montsiwa, Barolong Chief and Patriot*, (C. Struik, Cape Town, 1966) pp. 43-44; Sol Plaatje "Montsiwa" & "Moroka" in *The African Yearly Register Being an Illustrated National Biographical Dictionary (Who's Who) of Black Folks in Africa, contributions by leading Native Ministers, Professors, Teachers and Doctors* ("edited and compiled by T.D. Mweli Skota, Secretary General, A.N.C.," R.L. Esson, The Orange Press, 1930) pp. 52-64; and "ZK" Matthews "Barolong," *Ditirafalo*, pp. 17-19.

border. The Boer population in the Highveld then probably numbered about 12,000 of whom fewer than 5,000 lived in the Potchefstroon or Magaliesburg area affected by Pretorius' call to arms.[152] Scholtz's commando thus represented a significant commitment of the SAR's military resources. On the Saturday the 28th the force finally reached Dimawe, where they found the erstwhile rival BaNgwaketse factions of Senthufe and Segotshane along with the BaKgatla bagaMmanaana and other recent refugees had coelesced for their common defense under Sechele's leadership.[153] The BaTswana, who had been instructed not to fire unless first fired upon, displayed their firepower before the enemy but allowed the Boers to make their way through a narrow passage to the waters of the Kolobeng river.[154] At Sechele's suggestion a truce was agreed upon which lasted through the following Sabbath day giving the two parties time to negotiate.

Scholtz's official report, contemporary accounts, and SeTswana historical traditions, recorded in Afrikaans, English, and SeTswana, are remarkably close in their agreement as to the words and deeds that passed between the opposing camps

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152. Estimate of 12,000 made by Vicar of Inhubane who visited the region on a diplomatic mission in 1855-56: Roger Wagner "Zoutpansberg: the dynamics of a hunting frontier, 1848-67" in *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*, p. 319. In much of the literature 5,000 is given as a common estimate of Transvaal's Boer population at the time.

153. Sechele to *Cape Town Mail* in BPP (1854) c.1758. BNA S 3/1 testimony of Tiro Motlhabani, interviewd by Moseley and Mahloane Sept. 29, 1925.

154. Acknowledged in Scholtz's report(s), also Chapman, vol. 1, p. 82.

during the prelude to the Battle of Dimawe.[155] The dialogue began with Scholtz's demand that Sechele unconditionally surrender Mosielele to his custody. He replied: "I shall not deliver up Mosielele for he has become my child, he is of my blood and has been swallowed, to remove him you must first rip open my belly and allow my bowels to drop out."[156] On the following day a number of the Boers are said to have attended the BaKwena Sunday prayer service led by Mebalwe, the local catechist, while the two leaders continued to their exchange messages and banter.[157]

Sechele was eager to impress his antagonist with his own confidence in his strength. In his letters to Schotlz, which were relayed by his messengers Selete and Masholobotho, he employed bravado as a tool of psychological warfare, while at the same time trying to find some ground for conciliation.[158] In Chapman's assessment "Sechelli was cool, Scholtz hot.

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155. S.A. Arg. Tvl, vol 2, pp. 363-366 (Scholtz w/Pretorius and C. Potgieter.) Holden, pp. 380-86 (Scholtz etc. & "Veritas".) LMS: Moffat to Thompson, Sept. 20, 1852; Ashton to Tidman, Sept. 25, 1852; and Iglis to Directors, Oct. 16, 1852. Livingstone: *Private Journals*, pp. 95-97; *Mission Correspondence*, pp. 213-38; and in BPP (1852-53) c.1649. Sechele: in BPP (1854) c.1758; and to Moffat in *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society*, vol. 17 (1853), p. 34 (also versions in Livingstone's *Travels*, pp. 118-19; and *Private Journals*, pp. 85-90.) Schapera, *South African Papers*: pp. 49-66 & 130-77, including (those not seen elsewhere) Edwards, pp. 130-44; Scholtz to Pretorius, pp. 151-54; "Attack of the Boers on Sechele" (*Cape Town Mail*, Nov. 6, 1852) pp. 163-65. Chapman, vol. 1, 82-83. Kruger, *Memiors*, vol. 1, p. 44. BNA PP 1/1/10-11 Gokatweng, Phutegelo, Kwadira Lesele, and Morobodi. Sebele, *Dico*, p. 45. Schapera *Praise Poems*, pp. 133-34.

156. These words with only minor variations appear in almost all of the accounts of the conflict, Schapera, *Ditirafalo*, p. 51, renders it: "Ba mo mpeng ya me, le ka e phunya la ba ntsha." Sechele's imagery can be interpreted as a SeTswana metaphor in which his "child," Mosielele, has returned to the "womb" of its "mother."

157. Livingstone *Missionary Correspondence*, p. 219.

158. The identities of Sechele's two go-betweens are preserved in his praise poem (*leboko*), in Schapera *Praise Poems*, p. 134.

Sechelli sent to ask him for a little tea and sugar, Scholtz said men of war need no such thing but I will give you chillies enough."[159] The BaKwena deputation also warned the Boers against pasturing their oxen in local areas where the grass was poisonous as Sechele "now looked upon them as his own." On a more serious level they agreed to face to face negotiations the next morning. The Monday conference failed to resolve anything. Scholtz refused to justify Mosielele's extradition but underscored the real issues at stake by renewing the old stipulations that the BaKwena disarm, agree to supply laborers, and cooperate in the apprehension of "traitors."[160] In his reply Sechele offered the Boers gunpowder if they had not brought along enough for a long fight.

The battle commenced with the Boer forces storming the BaKwena battery. Using their BaTswana auxiliaries as a human shield, they were able to penetrate and set fire to the town itself, at which point many many of the BaTswana including the Mmanaana-BaKgatla and BaNgwaketse scattered. Sechele is credited with forbidding his men from firing on the auxiliaries, an action that is supossed to have ultimately gained him the allegiance of large numbers of BaHurutshe who would otherwise have been the principal victims of a BaKwena broadside.[161] According to Scholtz's report the combat lasted for six hours with the Boer forces seizing two "rocky ridges" and "intrenchments" from the BaKwena who remained in possession of a third kloof. Sechele had a number of close brushes with death. According to one reconstruction he at one

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159. Chapman, vol. 1, p. 82.

160. Chapman, vol. 1, p. 83 which is echoed by Sechele, "Veritas," and Livingstone. Scholtz's report simply says that he offered Sechele peace reminding him that he had been "poor and small" before the Boers had dispersed Umzilagazi and that "having now grown rich by the burghers he should not become too arrogant."

161. BNA PP 1/1/11 Morebodi. Chapman, vol. 1, p. 83.

point was nearly cornered by Boer pursuers but drove them back with his marksmanship while MmaSebele, taking over from his slain servant, loaded his guns.[162] He, himself, stated that for much of the battle "I was surrounded on the hill, with only a few men, by the boers."[163] With night approaching the exhausted Boers withdrew with at least four dead and six seriously wounded. Neither side could claim victory.[164]

Under the cover of darkness Sechele retreated, regrouping his forces at Dithubaruba hill, a natural fortress that in the past had often served as a stronghold.[165] Livingstone alleges that the following morning Boers massacred the BaKwena wounded whom they found left behind.[166] Scholtz then sent his forces out on reconnaisence and for the next two days they engaged in a number of skirmishes but did not storm the defences at Dithubaruba.[167] The BaKgatla, in particular, are said to have suffered from these forays, while Senthufe's BaNgwaketse put up a defence at Kgwakgwe hill (Kanye.)[168] During the entire campaign the Boers managed to capture some

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162. Andrew Anderson *Twenty-Five Years in a Waggon in the Gold Regions of Africa*, (Chapman Hall, London, 1887, 2 vols.) vol. 1, p. 129. Anderson's claim that Sechele had personally killed five Boers is probably exaggerated.

163. BPP (1854) c.1758. Livingstone, *Private Journals*, p. 96, put the number of men with Sechele at thirty-six. Also Chapman, vol. 1, p. 83.

164. Schotlz's reports. Schapera, *Praise Poems*, p. 133: "Crack Shot, brother of Kgosidintsi (ie. Sechele), he and Paul (Kruger) shot each other all day; at midday Paul became tired, Crack Shot alone remained shooting.

165. Chapman, vol. 1, p. 81, calls the site "Shokwuane," but his writing along with those of Livingstone and SeKwena accounts identify the place as Dithubaruba, which is not the same as the Shokwane of Sechele's earlier residence.

166. Livingstone, *Private Journals*, p. 96.

167. A popular story, repeated by Edwin Smith, *Great Lion of Bechuanaland*, p. 161, holds that the Boers were scared off by the giant *Aloe marlothii* forest on the approach to the hill, which in the twilight they are said to have mistaken for the BaKwena warriors.

168. "Veritas" in Holden, p. 385.

three thousand head of cattle along with about two hundred women and perhaps four hundred children.[169] Included among the captives was Sechele's eldest son, Kgari. Additional valuable property, belonging to the BaKwena and various foreigners who passed through their town, was also seized as war prizes and auctioned.[170] Some of the items taken probably came from Livingstone's, at the time unoccupied, mission station at Kolobeng when the Boers broke into the "gunmakers shop."[171]

On the third of September, Scholtz returned to the SAR having failed to gain the submission of the BaKwena and their allies. According to BaKwena sources, the Boers suffered additional losses during and immediately after this retreat as a result of Sechele's stealth (*ka bonokwane*) attacks.[172] While Sechele confirms that the BaKwena lost some eighty nine men in battle the total number of Boer casualties is a matter of some dispute.[173] Various accounts agree that three to four

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169. Numbers given in statement by Sechele before British Resident Bloemfontein, January 11, 1853, BPP ORT (1852-53) 1646. Elsewhere Sechele talked of one thousand children missing. Additional estimates by others in the same bluebook. Also Chapman, vol. 1., p. 82, 84.

170. "Attack of the Boers on Secheli" in Schapera *South African Papers*, pp. 163-65, p. 165.

171. Scholtz reports (in both Holden, p. 383 and S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 2, p. 366), state that Livingstone's house was locked when his men broke into it, but that the that the "missionary residence"/"*zendelings huis*" was open. There were two buildings, Livingstone's home and the church/school. The latter would have been open under any circumstance. There are also unsubstantiated reports of Livingstone furniture occupying pride of place in Boer households. WCW/SO 739, Willoughby to Wilder October 30, 1916; also LMS John T. Brown, June 21, 1912; and Robert U. Moffat *John Smith Moffat* (London 1921) p. 109. See also Schapera's comments in *South African Papers*, pp. 175-77.

172. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kwadire Lesele and Phuthegelo. Supported by Chapman's discriptions of Boer community panic (below.)

173. BPP. (1854) c.1758. statement to *Cape Town Mail*. Additional BaNgwaketse and BaKgatla casualties must have occurred.

Boers and one "Hottentot" or "Bastard" were killed and another six or seven Boers were wounded while storming Dimawe.[174] Sechele, in October of 1852, told Chapman that he only saw "3 or 4" Boers killed but that Griquas had informed him that thirty of his enemies had died.[175] In the beginning of the previous month Moffat, based on information "elicited from persons who passed through these scenes of desolation a day or two after the Boers had left," also spoke of "upwards of 30" Boer fallen, while, later in the same month, Livingstone, noting the reports of additonal deaths of enemy wounded, raised the figure to thirty-five, a count which was subsequently echoed by many of his colleagues and Sechele.[176] The higher figures are also supported by Joseph Ludorf: "The boers pretend to have lost three men, but at Sechele's place they buried thirty, and three bodies they could not find;" and Robert Edwards: "They (ie. the BaKwena) assert the boers had twenty-five killed, and others wounded and carried off in wagons. This statement the latter will contradict, though the graves of their companions were counted by hunters returning southward."[177] The various calculations are not necessarily contradictory given that the higher figures could refer to possible Boer losses during the entire campaign and may have included those who subsequently died of wounds (in an era

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174. "Attack of the Boers on Sechele" reported that G. Wolmerans, N. Smith (elsewhere Smit), J. De Klerk, and Bezuidenhout, as well as Wolmeran's "Hottentot" servant were killed. Scholtz mentions the first three names and the "Bastard" servant in the English version of his report while also noting that in the Dutch account the severe injury of M. Viljoen.

175. Chapman, vol. 1, p. 82. Also Sechele *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society*, vol. 17 (1853), p. 34. In his September letter to Moffat, Sechele put Boer losses at 28.

176. LMS Moffat to Thompson, Sept. 20, 1852. Livingstone, *Private Journal*, p. 89, and *Family Letters*, vol. 2, p. 185. Sechele as reported by *Graaf-Reinet Herald* in Holden, p. 386.

177. Ludorf, October 16, 1852, in BPP (1854) c.1758. Edwards in *South African Papers*, p. 142.

when gunshot often resulted in a lingering death.) In his report of the subsequent attack on Monshiwa's BaRolong, Andries Pretorius, for example, notes that three of his men were wounded, one in the arm, all of whom subsequently died.[178] Schapera has further suggested that the higher figure incorporated dead auxiliaries.[179] This contention seems particularly plausible in the case of the "Hottentots" or *Oorlams* servants, whom the BaKwena are likely to have associated with the *Maburu*.[180] It should further be noted that while the above casualty estimates seem modest in comparison with the carnage that has occurred in other conflicts, the losses suffered by both sides represent a significant proportion of their fighting men.

For the attackers the battle of Dimawe was at best a Pyrrhic victory. It was the first occasion when armed BaTswana had effectively resisted the Boers. The success of the defenders is apparent from the subsequent course of events. Nine days after he began his withdraw from Kweneng, Scholtz reported to Pretorius: "I must regretfully inform you that I have been obliged to disband the commando, owing partly to the weakness of horse and oxen and partly to opposition among the men."[181] He went on to note that: "Moreover I greatly fear, since I cannot keep the commando (intact) to accomplish everything, that the Marico district will be unsafe....things have not worked out to my liking." Scholtz's concern proved well founded for in the months following Dimawe Sechele, along with other diKgosi, launched retalitory raids. Chapman, who

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178. S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 2, pp. 561-65.

179. Schapera, *South African Papers*, p. 177.

180. The Dutch/Afrikaans speaking "Hottentot," "Coloured," "Baster," etc., unlike the impressed African auxiliaries, served as marksmen during the attack and are more likely to have been given burials.

181. Schapera, *South African Papers*, Scholtz to Pretorius, Sept. 12, 1852, pp. 152-54.

was able to move between the two camps, reported in November of 1852 that:

> "All the Boers are still in laager, they have been in laager a long time. They dare not venture on their farms for fear of Sechelli. Their cattle are dying fast being too many together, and disease is amongst them. Two or 3 females died in laager."[182]

At the time the BaKwena war effort was primarily directed towards the traditional practice of cattle raiding, which the Boers proved incapable of counteracting. By the end of the year the impact of these "*ka bonokwane*" tactics had greatly increased as a result of the Boer attack on Montshiwa, which widened the conflict to include the Ratlou and Makgetla as well as RaTshidi clans of the BaRolong who, along with various BaHurutshe, also raided the enemy.[183] A contemporary newspaper account spoke of the "natives" having "united in a strong body" against the "farmers in the Miriqua district" further noting that:

> "Great destruction, of course, marked the progress of the conquering natives. Every homestead has been burned, and the standing corn ripe for sickle, together with the vineyards and gardens, which were then in full bloom, have been entirely destroyed."[184]

Such reports, while possibly exaggerated, are indicative of a growing desperation within the Boer community by the end of

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182. Chapman, vol. 1, p. 84.

183. Molema *Montshiwa*, pp. 42-50 and BPP (1854) c.1758, Ludorf letter. Also Plaatje, "Montshiwa" and "Moroka" in Skota, *Yearly Register*; and Matthews, "Barolong," in *Ditirafalo*. S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 2, p. 561, reported that Montshiwa and his allies had siezed 287 cattle from Boer farms in the Schoonspruit District during Nov.-Dec. of 1852. Also testimonies in BNA BNB 2443 "Bloemhof Commission of 1871."

184. *South African Commercial Advertiser* May 14, 1853 reprinted in BPP. (1854) c.1758. The article (also published in *Port Elizabeth Mercury*) purports to describe events of the previous December.

1852, which manifested itself in calls for a peaceful settlement.

Chapman's account of how an armistice was arranged, in January 1853, is a sequence of bizarre events. The previous September the hunter had been together with a party of Boers in Gamangwato where their presence had coincided with the arrival of Sechele's messengers who were calling upon the diKgosi living between Kudumane and the Zambezi to intercept and kill all of the Boers who passed through their respective territories. Those with Chapman, which included Jan Viljoen, were spared by Sekgoma who, after consulting with his Kgotla and the BaKwena, let the Boers get away. He reportedly told Viljoen: "Jannie, I love you and it is because I love you that I let you go....I know when you get home you will come and shoot me, but that is nothing."[185]

Upon reaching his own people Viljoen, became the leader of the rapidly growing peace party, which opposed Schotlz's desire to launch a new invasion of Kweneng. In a public meeting held to discuss the issue the Veld-Kornet accused the acting Commandant-General of being "the sole cause of the losses of the Boers and the enmity of all the tribes."[186] Meanwhile, by December, Pretorius was finding it impossible to reinforce an increasingly desperate Scholtz as his own authority began to crumble:

> "I reported <Schotz's plight> to Comm. L. Van Wyk and the Veldcornet of Zwartruggens, and gave the order that they should march out with as many men as they could gather, but the order was not followed; and this might be the reason why a big portion of the land has been abandoned and now lies fallow. Upon returning I realized that Comm. Schoeman was on his way to Groenfontyn and camped near Maricoo; so I sent him an order to come to

185. Chapman, vol. 1 p. 76.
186. Chapman, vol. 1 p. 85.

> Maricoo, for he had his men together, and to stay until I could re-build my ranks and march there myself; but this order, too, was not followed. If this segmentation persists we small number will be surrounded by dozens of enemies, be defeated and vanish. Even if we are united our task is difficult, but with all this disunity it has become impossible."[187]

Viljoen met with Pretorius and obtained his blessing to take up Sechele's own peace feelers. Viljoen then visited Sechele, who made the release of his son Kgari a precondition for establishing an armistice. Pretorius promptly purchased Kgari and turned him over to Viljoen.[188] But Viljoen, on his way to rendezvous with three of Sechele's representatives, was detained by "the presuming Scholtz." In anger the Veld-Kornet told the Commandant that "the thunder will fetch him."[189] That same afternoon, as another meeting gathered to hear Scholtz, lightening struck the laager killing or wounding twelve. Scholtz was found "sitting on a case of 75 lbs. of gunpowder, and the lightening penetrated between the box and his body; his legs and arms and sides were burnt, and he stooped like a man of 90." Exclaiming that the Lord had heard Viljoen's wish he allowed Kgari to be delivered to Sechele thus ending the fighting.

The armistice was followed by a tense period, during which Sechele pressed, through his own envoy Jan Kgatlane, as well as Viljoen, for the return of other captives seized by the Boers.[190] Some, though it is not clear how many or under

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187. S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 2, pp. 564-65. Earlier Livingstone, *Missionary Correspondence*, p. 228: "The Boers are reported to be quarrelling among themselves; the widows of those killed at Sechele's won't receive their share of the plunder, and curse Pretorious bitterly because he pretended to be sick while he sent their husbands on commando."

188. S.A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 2, p. 438.

189. Chapman, vol. 1, p. 85-86.

190. Robert Moffat *Matebele Journals*, vol. 1, pp. 162, 174, 346, 377.

what circumstances, did return. One prominent example is Keikgakile Seleka, better known as Plaatje, who afterwards was valued by Sechele for his Dutch education which allowed him to serve as an interpreter and public works supervisor.[191] The ceasefire lasted and eventually devolved into a durable peace between the SAR and western BaTswana groups living north of the Molopo river.[192] Hostilities ceased and cooperative and relatively amicable relations developed between these emerging states. Both sides came to recognize the Limpopo-Madikwe-Ngotwane as their de facto boundary line. It survives, with minor changes, as the modern border between Botswana and South Africa's Transvaal Province.[193] The only known case of a significant breakdown in the ceasefire occurred in May of 1853, when three Bakwena among a party sent to purchase grain were murdered. Kgosidintsi, acting on the absent Sechele's behalf, retaliated by having a Boer party of two ambushed and killed near Seleka.[194]

The Aftermath

A number of significant developments transpired in the immediate aftermath of the Boer invasion. One notable episode was Sechele's personal mission to the Imperial authorities in

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191. BNA PP 1/1/10 Edger Motsuminyane "Kgotla yoo Ra-Plaatje." I first came across the same Plaatje or "Polaki" (who surfaced in a number of my interviews) while interviewing at Kumakwane, with Opello Kgabo & his Kgotla, August 20, 1985; and (seperate interviews with) Grace Piet, Ann Kamanga & Ikopoleng Kooreme; J.J. Koloi; and Adam Ranku, all on August 23, 1985. (Keikgakile was not related to Sol Plaatje.)

192. Batswana groups living south of the Molopo continued to be periodically troubled by the Boers.

193. On occassion the SAR continued to claim jurisdiction in what is now Botswana but no attempt was made to enforce this claim (see chapter two, part two.)

194. Chapman, vol. 1. pp. 99-100. BNA PP 1/1/10 Phuthegelo. Robert Moffat *Matebele Journals*, vol. 1, pp. 346-49, 377-381.

Bloemfontein and Capetown.[195] With the backing of local traders, whose livelihoods as well as property had been a target of the Boer attack, he set out on his tour, which lasted from December of 1852 until June of 1853, taking him throughout the Cape Colony and Orange River Territory.[196] Two traders, Frederick Green and Sam Edwards, accompanied the Kgosi, who was most eager to have those provisions of the Sand River Convention that forbade the arms trade rescinded.

Throughout his journey Sechele was able to attract financial and press support. At Bloemfontein he enjoyed an initial advantage in that Frederick Green was the brother of Henry Green, the British Resident. The latter Green forwarded to Governor Cathcart, Sechele's statement on the attack with the added note that: "He <ie. Sechele> throws himself on the protection of his Excellency and the British Government, and trust that they will at least interfere to prevent a repetition of the slaughter which he has reason to think the boers now meditate."[197] In response the Governor wrote that, while he lamented the BaKwena losses and would refer the matter to London, he did not expect that Her Majesty's Government would authorize any intervention beyond the Vaal river in light of the Convention.[198] After receiving Cathcart's message, Sechele decided to sail from Port Elizbeth to Cape

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195. Principal sources on the mission found in BPP. (1852-53) c.1649 & (1854) c.1758. Holden. Livingstone (various writings.) LMS Thompson April 21, and June 21, 1853 (excerpted in Schapera *South African Papers*, pp. 146-48.)

196. The prominent role of traders suggested in BPP (1852-53) c.1646, Governor Cathcart to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Feb. 11, 1853. Also Livingstone *Private Journal*, p. 96 and by Kgosidintsi in Robert Moffat *Matebele Journals*, vol. 1 p. 379.

197. BPP (1852-53) c.1646: Statement by Sechele as translated by Sam Edwards , Jan. 11, 1853.

198. Cathcart to Green, Jan. 25, 1853, also Cathcart to Secretary of State for Colonies, Feb. 11, 1853 in BPP (1852-53) c.1646.

Town and, if unsuccessful there, proceed to London. In this endevour he won the support of a number of the British military officers encamped at Bloemfontein, who held a dinner for the Kgosi in which was "collected a handsome sum of money to enable him to pursue his journey to England."[199]

By the time he arrived at Cape Town Sechele's case was becoming widely championed by local groups opposed to the then emerging Imperial policy of withdrawal from the interior. Accounts by Sechele and his missionary and merchant supporters of Boer raiding and enslavement were invoked in an attempt to pressure London to abrogate the Convention and reverse its impending abandonment of the Orange River Territory. Although this campaign ultimately failed, Sechele created an important precedent for subsequent attempts by BaTswana rulers to shape Imperial policy, by forging alliances in order to appeal directly to public opinion in Britain and South Africa. He was unable to proceed to Britain, having been stalled at the Cape where his funds eventually proved inadequate.[200] But his cause, along with that of Montshiwa, reached the Secretary of State for the Colonies as "The united Memorial of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, the

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199. Livingstone *Travels*, p. 87. Report in *Graaf-Reinet Herald*, in Holden p. 386, states Sechele raised *L* 119 at Bloemfontien and *L* 10 at Colesburg "towards the expenses of the chief's journey to England.

200. In Cape Town Sechele was supported by a Mr. Rutherfoord, a local merchant associated with the work of the L.M.S., and Rev. William Thompson, the Society's South African head. LMS Thompson, June 21, 1853: "He (Sechele) is an interesting and much ill-used man, and Mr. Rutherfoord and myself greatly regretted that nothing could be done for him. We were not prepared to send him to England at the expense of the Society, and we could not raise the necessary funds in this country. Had either of our brethren Moffat or Livingstone accompanied him, a great interest in the aborigines of S. Africa would hve been created by their presence in England." (Earlier Livingstone had declined Sechele's request to accompny him- *Travels*, p. 121; and *Private Journal*, p. 95.)

Aborigines Protection Society, the London Missionary Society, the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and the Peace Society," whose principal enclosure was Sechele's long statement to the *Cape Town Mail*.[201]

Although the Cape Town mission created an important political precedent and shaped Sechele's personal world view, his successful defense of the Kweneng's independence had a much greater impact. During and immediately after the war, thousands more refugees fled into the Kweneng seeking refuge from the Boers and those rulers who were either incapable or unwilling to resist the settlers' demands. The largest exodus emanated from the Marico District, where at one point only the Bafokeng of Kgosi Mokgatle remained behind.[202] Major communities who sought BaKwena protection included: the BaHurutshe of Mangope and of Masega, the BaTlokwa of Semele and of Matlapeng, the BaLete of Mokgosi, and the BaTlhako of Mabe, as well as, somewht later, the BaRakgologadi of Sentso, the Griqua of Raseme Adam Kok, and the BaKgatla bagaKgafela faction of Letsebe.[203] Each of these groups, along with the BaKgatla bagaMmanaana of Mosielele and the BaKaa of Mosinye, maintained their autonomy under Sechele's paramount rule on the basis of what was in many respects a "first among equals" arrangement. Smaller parties of refugees also continued to arrive and be incorporated, as *baagedi*, for the most part within Kgosing.

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201. BPP. (1854) c.1758. L.A. Chameroozow, Sec. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to Duke of Newcastle, Sec. of State for Colonies, July 11, 1853 (enclosing memorial).

202. BNA PP 1/1/10 Gokatweng.

203. WCW/SO 739, Kgabo Tebele. BNA PP 1/1/10, 1/2/8,18, 1/3/13, 1/4/14; and SOC Sebele I to Bathoen I, July 8, 1908. Adam Ranku, interviewed August 23, 1985. On his way to Bloemfontein Sechele also met with his old rival Kgakge who agreed to return with his remaining followers to take up his position at the head of the booRaTshosa.

Between 1852 and 1863 the allied groups, *meratswane* ("junior *merafe*"), were located among the various hills adjacent to Sechele's stronghold at Dithubaruba, which was, itself, heavily fortified with a series of stone walls, trenches, and traps.[204] In 1857 Baldwin estimated the total population of the hills to be 20,000.[205] A few years later, despite the return of a significant number of refugees, Emil Holub estimated "Sechele's actual subjects to be about 35,000" whilst those "that reside in the country, but are not tributory to him, amount to 18,000 to 20,000 more."[206] Similar figures for the period are recorded by Rodger Price and others, which demonstrate an enormous growth in Sechele's following from the approximately two hundred subjects under him at the beginning of the period of the "white ants."[207]

The growth of Sechele's state, along with the defense of Dimawe and cultivation of British public opinion, convinced the Boers to adopt a policy of peaceful coexistence. In 1857 an era of improved relations began when the new constitutional government of the SAR, through the ever purposeful Jan Viljoen, took up Sechele's request for missionaries by arranging for the Hermannsburg, German Evangelical Lutheran, Mission to serve the BaKwena.[208] Even before the sacking of his mission, Livingstone had decided to abandon the Bakwena in order to indulge his wanderlust. The L.M.S. failed to replace him, thus creating an opening for the

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204. The impressive remains of Dithubaruba can be seen today. The site is 12 kilometers south west of Molepolole.

205. Baldwin, *African Hunting*, p. 175.

206. Emil Holub *Seven Years in South Africa* (translated by Ellen Frewer, two volumes, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, 1881; Johnson Reprint 1971) vol. 1 p. 315.

207. LMS Price, March 15, 1862; and July 11, 1867. J.S. Moffat in *The Matebele Mission of J.S. and E. Moffat* (edit. J.P.R. Wallis, Chatto & Windus, London 1945), p. 203.

208. For a general discussion of the Hermannsburg Mission among the BaTswana see Chirenje, pp. 69-86.

Germans. On July 16, 1857 the Hanoverian minister, Schroeder, and schoolteacher, Muller, along with their wives and artisan collaegue, Herbst, arrived at Dithubaruba.[209] The Lutherans worked closely with the Kgosi and local lay readers, such as Hendrick Paulo and Jan Khatlane, with whom they shared preaching responsibilities.[210] As indicated by Fritsch's Sabbath observations, Church membership and attendance grew dramatically. By 1866 when the L.M.S. was restored the Sunday Services had overflowed the church, recquiring that the larger part of the congregation be ministered to in the Kgotla.[211] With Sechele's support, Lutheran proselytizing also spread to the various allied communities as well as to the BaNgwato, thus introducing Christianity as a major force into Botswana.

With the missionaries came a flowering of economic, political and social ties with the Boers. By 1865 Bakwena work parties were being contracted, through Sechele, to provide manual labor in the Transvaal.[212] At the same time Boer artisans began migrating to the Kweneng in small numbers, laying the basis for a permanent community among the BaKwena. By 1880 *Maburu* children were attending the BaKwena, SeTswana medium, school and in others ways becoming integrated within

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209. BNA PP 1/8/1 *Hermannsburger Missions Blatt*, September 1857. S. A. Arg. Tvl., vol. 3, pp. 154, 174, 177, 192, 491-492.

210. Thomas M. Thomas *Eleven Years in Central South Africa* (Rhodesiana Reprint, Bulawayo, 1970 of 1873 original) p. 47; also references in Robert Moffat *Matebele Journals*. vol. 1, 3rd journey, vol. 2, 4rth journey.

211. Elizabeth Price, pp. 173, 210; and Smith *Great Lion of Bechuanaland*, p. 180. Thomas, p. 47, put the congregation by the end of the decade at four to five hundred.

212. Thomas Leask *The Southern African Diaries of Thomas Leask, 1865-1870* (edited by J.P.R. Wallis, Central African Archives Oppenhiemer Series number eight, Chatto & Windus, London, 1954) p. 22. J. Moffat in *Matebele Mission* p. 114.

the local community.[213] While a few Boers were becoming part of SeKwena society, the BaKwena, like other BaTswana, were assimilating aspects of Boer material culture. This phenomenon is reflected, to some degree, in the Afrikaans loan words that have been incorporated into the SeTswana vocabulary. It is also notable that a number of BaKwena, including Sechele's heir, Sebele, spoke Dutch/Afrikaans, while knowledge of English at the time was rare.[214] Dutch/Afrikaans was occasionally used in the church.[215] Regular postal routes as well as most wagon commerce also began to pass through the Boer town of Zeerust.[216]

With the establishment of peace the Kweneng entered into an era of relative prosperity, fueled in large part by the continued resilience of the Kgalagadi trade and the expansion of new activities, such as transport riding and, after 1867, cash remittances from migrant labor to the Kimberly diamond mines. This boom period allowed at least some BaKwena to enjoy a degree of wealth which would not be duplicated by their children or grandchilden. By 1870 the state was strong and respected. Its leading ladies arrived for Sunday services dressed with layers of petticoats under their dresses and imported Tyrolese hats, while men also donned their Sunday

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213. Elizabeth Price, p. 389 (for school, many other references to the community: on p. 417 she notes that she does not allow the "little ones" to associate too closely with either the Boers or "Natives").

214. Edwin Lloyd *Three Great African Chiefs*, (T. Fisher Unwin, London, 1895) p. 213. Despite his schooling at Kudumane and years of intereaction with British he never mastered English.

215. LMS Charles William, Molepolole Aug. 8, 1870. During the early years of colonial rule British officials also employed Dutch/Afrikaans to communicate with the BaKwena- BNA H.C. 15/14 Administrater to High Commissioner, Aug. 12, 1887.

216. J. Moffat in *Matebele Mission*, pp. 253-53. The Hermannsburg missionaries served as SAR postal agents.

best.[217] The Paramount Kgosi, who in his youth had "lived just like a Mokgalagadi," now resided in a mansion whose drawing room was dominated by a large crystal chandelier.[218] His table boasted fine china, silver, and white linen. There, dressed in his dinner jacket, he entertained foreign guests at teas and meals of turkey and sirloin with Worchester sauce, curry, mixed-pickles, sardines, and soda water from his fountain, as well as bread baked from the flour produced in his irrigated wheat field.[219] Between the Diamond Fields and the Zambezi no ruler could match the son of Motswasele in conspicuous consumption or political ambition. But the realm's power and prosperity were in many respects superficial, a thin veneer of perceptions covering substantial vulnerabilities.

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217. Hugh Exton "Secheli and His People," in *Cape Monthly Magazine*, vol. 1 (1870) pp. 182-188, p. 187.

218. Elizabeth Price, p. 281.

219. Dining at the Sechele's: Hugh Exton, p. 185; Holub, *Seven Years*, vol. 1, p. 323; Elizabeth Price, pp. 197, 220, 227, 248, 281, 377; Walter Kerr *The Far Interior* (Sampson Low, London, 1886) p. 27; Gustav Fritsch, *Drie Jahre*, p. 338.

Chapter 2

THE KINGDOM TO 1885

This chapter examines aspects of Kweneng's internal and external politics between the period of the BaTswana-Boer War and establishment of Britain's Bechuanaland Protectorate, in 1885. On the eve of the imposition of colonial authority over it the BaKwena state had only just emerged from the period of Civil Wars, whose dislocations had reduced the polity's overall wealth and influence. Much of the eastern Kweneng had been lost to BaKgatla invaders. Sechele had also lost his ability to manipulate events in GammaNgwato and elsewhere. Internally his *bogosi* was challenged by divisions over social hierarchy and Christian belief. The boom years in the trade of Kgalagadi gameproducts had also come to an end. Despite these developments, the borders of the realm were now more thoroughly controlled and the Kgalagadi interior was more fully subjugated. Restoration of peaceful cooperation with neighboring *morafe*, and the initial growth of migrant labor, had, furthermore, created a sense of security and renewed economic opportunty for some. The era of Kweneng's extreme underdevelopment as a labour reserve was as yet only on the horizon.

Part 1: Civil Society

The two decades which followed the 1853 truce were a time of relative peace and prosperity within the borders of what cartographers now demarcated as Sechele's Kingdom. His realm's good fortune encourged the Kgosi in his pursuit of dynastic and commercial pre-eminence throughout the region that is now Botswana. An understanding of the relative success and failure of his efforts calls for a examination of the nature and sources of his power. Although his state emerged under his personal rule, his ability to promote his

expansionist designs was constrained by the prevailing constitutional norms and social divisions within his polity, as well as fluctuations within the regional balance of power. Sechele's own lack of imperial authority precluded him from attempting to engage in a policy of empire building.

Kweneng's role as a regional power, in the aftermath of the BaTswana-Boer War is consistent with Machiavelli's classic contention that: "The foundation of all states, new as well as old or composite, are good laws and good arms." At the time the the guns of "Crack Shot" were both instruments of his power and important symbols of his prestige. According to his nephew, Kgabo Tebele, his living name was praised among the various *merafe* through popular identification of the SeTswana song "Thuthuyane," with the blasting of his rifles at Dimawe.[1] Despite the Sand River Convention, arms continued to flow into his domain. The Kgalagadi trade and the growth of regional arms dealing that resulted from the opening of the Kimberly mines ensured a steady supply. Most of the weapons became the private property of individuals. A degree of royal control over armaments was, nonetheless, maintained by the Kgosi's custodianship over local stockpiles of bullets and powder. Sechele took his munitions seriously. Once, during wartime, when a thief was caught breaking into the powder magazine, the Kgosi punished the pilferer with unusual severity: he was blinded, tortured, and then executed.[2]

Sechele, like most BaTswana monarchs, was more often occupied with legal and administrative rather than military responsibilities. It was in these areas that his powers were most circumscribed in accordance with the SeTswana pattern of diffused authority. The royal Kgotla remained simply the ultimate forum of appeal. Most decisions were resolved in

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1. WCW/SO 739, Kgabo Tebele M.S., p. 11
2. Elizabeth Price, pp. 432-33.

either the subordinate fora of the client kgotla grouped within Kgosing or, more infrequently, the other four autonomous *metse* under the direct authority of their senior diKgosana. Over the *meratswane* his purview was still more narrow. The autonomous immigrant communities remained under their own rulers who were generally addressed as "Kgosi." In keeping with the proverb "when a elephant crosses the river it becomes a small elephant," (*"fa tlou e tlhola noka, ke tloutswana"*,) these leaders recognized Sechele's paramountcy but otherwise remained free of tributary obligations, such as those that had been imposed on the conquered communities of the Kweneng-Kgalagadi. Only in an extraordinary circumstance, such as a severe dispute over succession to *bogosi*, might the Paramount Kgosi be called upon to mediate in their internal affairs. Otherwise his influence over the *meratswane* was largely confined to his role of allocating land and granting access to local resources.

Through the Kgosi those BaKwena with recognized paternal descent from the *morafe's* founder, the Sons of Kgabo, whose members could also be addressed as diKgosana, looked upon themselves as the owners of the country. In practice the rulers of the larger *meratswana*, along with the leaders of the four *metse* and and favored lineage leaders from within Kgosing, were delegated by Sechele to exercise control over given areas as *badisa ba mafatshe*, literally "herdsmen of the lands.[3] Until quite recently, this system seems to have given rise to remarkably little inter-group conflict probably due to

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3. The institution of *badisa ba mafatshe* as it existed in the 1940s is discussed in some detail by Van Niekerk, "Die Administratiewe Strucktuur," chapters 4 & 5, as well as his earlier reports in BNA S 471.

the relative abundance of land in the past.[4] But Sechele and his successors were careful to deny the immigrants direct access to the gameproducts of the Kgalagadi interior. Thus after the breakup of the defensive pattern of concentrated settlement round Dithubaruba in 1863, the *meratswana* communties were confined to the south-east of the Kweneng hills.

Despite the checks on his authority Sechele reigned as a "judicial activist," who is credited with having established a number of important precedents in local SeTswana as well as SeKwena customary law. An aspect of his rulings, undoubtedly influenced by his Protestant values, was the promotion of the nuclear family. Some examples, as noted by Kgabo Tebele, who grew up under Sechele, include: the imposition fines against those who enticed married woman away from their husbands, the condemnation of the, then common, practice of mate sharing, the granting widows some authority over their deceased husbands property, the modifying inheritance laws in favor of sons over their maternal uncles, and the denial of inheritance to rivals of the deceased.[5] Unlike a number of his Christian peers he made no known attempt to abolish bride wealth, *bogadi*, apparently preferring to let the church enforce its own canons against the custom.

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4. In all of my interviews in the *moratswana* communities of Gabane, Mmankgodi, and Thamaga, as well as in my archival research I was frankly surprized to find no evidence that the issue of land allocation was a significant factor in local grievences about BaKwena overule.

5. WCW/SO 739, Kgabo Tebele M.S. pp. 2-8. Kgabo's writing on Sechele was undoubtedly shaped by his own Protestant values. While this bias should be recognized his account is, in general, consistent with other sources and subsequent developments. BNA PP 1/8/2 *Hermannsburger Missions Blatt* no. 6 (1859), p.36- further on practice of couple exchange.

Sechele also sought to control strong drink. Public drunkeness, beerdrinking by children, the manufacture and use of *kgadi* and, by 1885, "cape smoke" brandy, as well as other "European" spirits were all prohibited.[6] But neither he nor his successors, none of whom were teetotallers, restricted the manufacture, sale or consumption of local sorghum beer, *bojalwa jwa SeTswana*.[7] In some of his other edicts he acted as a pioneer conservationist. Concern over deforestation, and possibly a desire to strengthen his royal monopoly over local timber resources, led him to restrict the chopping of green wood in general and of certain trees altogether. In a vain attempt to preserve the vitality of the feather trade, he also forbade the killing of female ostriches.[8]

Despite the general SeTswana principle that the Kgosi's word was law, Sechele's wishes could be ignored or rejected. For example though he introduced the system of *Badisa wa mafatshe*, Kgabo maintains that he could not win public approval for his goal of populating his domain through the establishment of BaKwena settlements subordinate to his capital.[9] Sechele's power was limited by more than public opinion. At least following the abuses of Motswasele II, the diKgosi were held to be accountable before the law. In November of 1880 Sechele, who had inherited his father's short temper, struck and inadvertently killed one of his servants

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6. WCW/SO 739, Kgabo M.S. pp. 3, 13-14; Schapera *Tribal Innovators* pp. 46, 147-150. There is evidence that Sechele, himself, was for a number of years fond of Brandy. In apparent contrast to his successors he appears to have either moderated or given up this appreciation.

7. WCW/SO 739 Kgabo M.S., p. 14, states that Sechele did attempt to ban *boljalwa* during a *letsholo* meeting. Other accounts make it clear that if this initiative was made it was never carried through.

8. Hugh Exton, pp. 187-88.

9. WCW/SO 739, Kgabo M.S. p. 15.

named Mphakane.[10] Kgabo claims that, prior to his trial the next morning, the Kgosi was in quite fearful of the consequences of his actions, but was relieved that: "the BaKwena found no guilt in him since he had truly born self witness and the deed was accidental." The local church congregation subsequently agreed with this judgement after conducting its own, separate, enquiry.

Sechele's reported trepidation during the above affair can be attributed to his awareness that his subjects were "the BaKwena who would kill their Kgosi." The regicide at Shokwane haunted the Kgosi and, in the process, shaped the character of his kgotla. Despite Sechele's celebrated courage in battle, Kwadira Lesele maintains that he would become visibly upset whenever the fate of his father was mentioned.[11] Whenever he lost control of his temper he would make amends through the etiquette of "*matlhatsa a thelela*," literally to "vomit and cover," which meant that he would apologize to, and if appropriate compensate, even the most humble of his subjects who became the unjust focus of his anger.[12] The ghost of Modimowagae also offers an explanation as to why the Kgosi's *maotlana* or "beaters" were disbanded. Until recently the *maotlana* have existed in most SeTswana societies as the Kgosi's police. But among the BaKwena popular memory of their abuses under Motswasele is said to have undermined the institution.[13]

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10. WCW/SO 739 Kgabo M.S. pp. 6-7. BNA PP 1/1/10 Gokatweng. Elizabeth Price, p. 430. The accounts do not mention who presided over the kgotla, though it seems likely that it would have been a paternal uncle or brother.

11. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kwadira Lesele, who claims that on such occasions he would flee his court until, with the support of Segakisa and Kgosidintsi, he was able to regain his composure.

12. WCW/SO 739 Kgabo M.S., p. 6.

13. WCW/SO 739 Kgabo M.S, p. 2. Abuses of *maotlana* also mentioned in BNA PP 1/1/10 Phuthegelo and Kalayamore in the context of the booMaota succession.

In general Sechele's judicial rulings were fair and his fines light. In cases involving lost or destroyed property he often allowed a poor person who was fined an ox to pay with a sheep or goat "as people were unequally privileged."[14] But some of his sentences were draconian. Particularly upsetting to his missionaries was the continued practice of putting those convicted of *boloi*, sorcery or witchcraft, to torture and death.[15] BaKwena accounts emphasize that harsh punishment was almost always carried out as a result of communal consensus rather than simply the monarch's whim.[16] Kwadira and Gokatweng also insist that his subjects showed no resentment over his occasional practice of shooting one of their livestock for his personal benefit.[17]

Within the Kgotla Sechele lacked both the will and the means to rule in a truly autocratic manner. The growth of royal patronage and his cagey ability to make judicious use of it did allow him to enhance his power in other areas. Although the prestige of his office provided the Kgosi with a certain mystique, his influence ultimately rested on a material foundation. He therefore sought to maximize his regulatory power over local resources. Of crucial importance was his proprietorship over the cattle herds, whose numbers steadily increased through the incorporation of "stray" stock (*matimela*), war booty, and beasts acquired through levies, fines, and other payments. With these herds he was able to extend his patronage through *mafisa*. He also benefited from

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14. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kwadira.
15. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kalaymore & Phuthegelo claim that Rodger Price convinced Sechele to end the practice but colonial as well as mission documents show that the practice continued.
16. WCW/SO 739 Kgabo M.S., pp. 10-11. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kwadira, Gokatweng, Kalayamore & Phuthegelo.
17. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kwadira, and Gokatweng, both of who cite the practice as evidence of Sechele's popularity. Such "hunting" earned Sechele the nickname "Sejadima," probably from *se ja dinama* meaning "carnivore."

royal game restrictions as well as his right to extract tribute, *sehuba*, in the form of ostrich feathers and karosses, as well as meat, from hunters.[18] In addition Sechele regulated local commercial activities such as transport riding and labor recruitment.

Sechele was able to maintain a balance of power between himself and the two competitive social categories that, excluding the *malata*, made up SeKwena society: the "Sons of Kgabo" and the "commoners." The latter faction was made up mostly of refugees, *baagaedi*, and those who had apparently risen from *malata* status, such as Segakisa. Through royal assent the commoners had succeeded in assimilating themselves as fullfledged BaKwena citizens, although their outside origen was often apparent from their continued allegiance family totems other than that of the crocodile.[19] Commoners benefited from royal patronage by gaining access to land and, through commerce and raiding as well as *mafisa*, cattle. As a reward for loyal service, a few commoners also acquired significant political power. Sechele's four youthful companions, Segakisa, Magogwe, Mosimane, and Ketsabile were collectively appointed to act as his "listeners" (*bareeletsi*.) As such it was their responsibility to monitor the activities of the "four corners," that is various *metse*, of the BaKwena capital.[20] They and

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18. *Sehuba* literally means "the breast." As Schapera has pointed out, *Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, p. 63, it was the general SeTswana custom that the breast portion of any animal killed as well as one tusk of every elephant and the skins of lions and leopards and all animals killed during communal, *letsholo*, hunts be given to the Kgosi. Among the BaKwena the meaning of *sehuba* was expanded to legitimize the wider pattern of expropriation of surplus gameproducts from the *malata* populations.

19. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kwadira states of Sechele: "If he did not like peace so much he would have reduced the refugees to the status of servants in the way that Kgosi Khama did to those who fled to him from the Matebele."

20. Interview with Ratlou Ketsabile, Oct. 8, 1985. Van Niekerk, "Die Administratiewe Struktuur," pp. 36, 46.

their successors, the heads of the Difetlhamolelo, Maribane, Senyedima and Molalo wards, also constituted a private council of royal advisors. By the 1930's the aforementioned sections, as well as a number of others, had grown into major sub-divisions within Molepolole, referred to in SeKwena as *dintla* (literally "points"). As a result of the incorporation of cattle clientage as well as internal reproduction, the *dintla* became sub-divided into clusters of junior kgotla. This expansion was accompanied by a rise in the status of the section heads who could now rightfully claim to be diKgosana, in this case simply denoting "junior Kgosi" rather than membership among the Sons of Kgabo.

Particularly valued for their skills were ex-*oorlams*, Griqua refugees, and products of Moffat's school at Kudumane. Men such as Jan Khatlane, Hendrick Paulo, Rramoroboro, Kobwepori, Yacob and Keikgakile Plaatje were able to serve *bogosi* as secretaries, mansion staff, gardeners growing specialty crops, public works overseers, and *moruti* of the church's outstations. Plaatje, for instance, after serving as the court translator was appointed as the Kgosana over the then predominantly Griqua community at Kumakwane, partially in appreciation for the key role he played in coordinating the local construction of a new irrigation dam at Kolobeng.[21] In this position he served as the leader the community's church-school as well as kgotla, while being also responsible for the local irrigation system, which fed what were probably the only wheat fields to be found in nineteenth-century Botswana.

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21. BNA PP 1/1/11 Mocuminyane. Interviews with Kgosana Oppello Kgabo and Kgotla, Aug. 20, 1985; Grace Piet, Ann Kamanga & Ikopoleng Kooreme; also J.J. Koloi; and Adam Ranku, all on Aug. 23, 1985. Elizabeth Price, p. 452. LMS Lloyd, Jan. 15, 1902.

Some sections of the commoner group achieved the status of *Basimane ba Kgosi*, "Boys of the *Kgosi*, through their performance of what became hereditary obligations. As noted in the last chapter, Segakisa and his senior descendents had the prestigious duty of *mogotsa-molelo*, or starter of the royal Kgotla fire. Another example is that of the "Makgata makgotla," that is Difetlhamolelo, Basimane, Maribana, and Dikoloi sections, which bore the major responsibility for looking after the royal fields, *masotla*, which they cultivated for the Kgosi. At least during the twetieth century, such duties required only modest labor and appear to have been looked upon as a honor rather than a burden.[22] The system of *masotla* fields should not be confused with *Dikgafela*, the "traditional tax" by which the Kgosi in times of good harvest was entitled to a basket of sorghum meal from the women of each household excepting those grouped within BooNtloedibe and the *meratswane*.[23] Ideally the Kgosi was to use the agricultural surpluses he acquired from the above tributes in order to provide for the needs of the Kgotla, visitors, and the destitute. Grain was also stored in royal granaries as a communal hedge against drought.

Many of the Sons of Kgabo prospered under Sechele. As leaders of the *metse* and *Badisa wa mafatshe*, they shared with Kgosi right to allocate land and collect *sehuba* tribute from the hunters of the Kweneng-Kgalagadi. Based on the increased exploitation of *malata* during the boom years of the trade in ostrich feathers, some of the Sons of Kgabo transformed themselves into an incipient fuedal class. Both they and the commoners also benefited from their particiption in the

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22. Interviews w/T. Mhiemang, Aug. 28, 1985 and Majaasuma Matlhabani, Oct. 11, 1986. Also BNA S 47/6 Asst. D.C.Mol. to G.S. March 27, 1937 enclosing "Report on personal services to which the Chief is entitled under Sekwena law and custom."

23. Exclusion of BooNtloedibe was based on their geneological seniority among the Sons of Kgabo.

hunting expeditions Sechele was able to annually send to the Chobe-Zambezi region. At least until the late 1870s access to the elephants of the area was shared between the BaKwena, BaNgwato, and BaTawana.[24]

The Sons of Kgabo had a natural interest in promoting and preserving the role of genealogy in defining access to power, thus providing a potential source of conflict between themselves and rising members of the commoner group. Although the division between the two groups persisted, the social boundary between them was never rigid. In addition to their common loyalty to *bogosi* and SeKwena norms, intermarriage, common economic interests, and crosscutting ideological alliances rooted in Christian and pre-Christian belief, served to bind the two factions together. For his part Sechele was content to please both camps in order to build up his *bogosi*. He sanctioned both the extension of "noble" privileges and "yeoman" rights among his subjects. Subsequent monarchs found this balancing act hard to maintain.

During Sechele's tenure BaKwena society became progressively split between the supporters and opponents of the initiation process, male *bogwera* and female *bojale*.[25] Sechele and other converts supported the missionary opposition to these "heathen ceremonies."[26] This opposition

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24. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kalaymore and Gokatweng. E. Holub *Travels North of the Zambezi* (edited by Ladislav Holy, University of Zambia Press, Lusaka 1975) p. 26.

25. That is the traditional processes of initiation which in the former case involved circumcision as part of its cycle. According to Schapera *A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*, p. 116, among the Kgafela-Bakgatla female initiates were subjected to an operation which "consisted in branding the inner part of the right thigh close to the vulva." This is consistent with Lloyd, p. 228.

26. Though Willoughby maintains that the Kgosi's stand against the practice "was little more than nominal"- WCW/SO 739 "Sechele and Bogwera."

was based on the association of various rituals with pre-Christian "demigods" as well as allegedly "immoral" teachings and "lewd" songs and dances which they associated with the rites.[27] During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries an overwhelming majority of BaKwena remained loyal to their "traditional schools." Even a number of Sechele's own children, led by his senior prince Sebele and princess Ope, defied paternal authority in the matter.[28]

The names of the male regiments that were formed during Sechele's reign, following his baptism, reflect the then ongoing public debate over *bogwera*.[29] For example Sebele I's regiment, initiated in c.1856, was called the "MaThubantwa," meaning "those who broke up the battle." They were given this name after the Sebele ended the argument between his father, Sechele, and uncle, Kgosidintsi, over whether he should participate in *bogwera*, by making his own decision to attend. The next regiment to be initiated, c.1862, was called the "MaTlolakgang," or "those of continuing strife." This name specifically refers to the refusal of Tumagole and Kgari to obey their elder brother Sebele's wish that they also attend

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27. W.C. Willoughby "Notes on the initiation ceremonies of the Becwana" in *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* no. 39 (1909), pp. 295-314; and J.T. Brown "Circumcision rites by the Becwana Tribes" (also in J.R.A.I.) no. 51, (1921), pp. 419-427. Also Rev. W.J. Clissold, unpublished M.S. at St. Paul's Anglican Church Molepolole (copy deposited at B.N.A.) pp. 49, 55-64, which is largely based on the L.M.S. accounts.

28. Robert Moffat *Journals*, vol. 1, pp. 173-174 (for Ope.) Sebele and Ope's choice in this regard came after and despite (or perhaps in spite) of their boarding with the Moffat family while they attended the L.M.S. school at Kudumane.

29. BNA PP 1/5/13 interpretations of Jean Germond. Ratlou Ketshabile interviewed Oct. 8, 1985. WCW/SO 739, notes on *mephato* by Willoughby. A.J. Wookey "A Struggle at Molepolole" in *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society*, (August 1887), pp. 342-345.

bogwera as part of the regiment.[30] In 1866 the "MaGanamokgwa," or "those who shirk the custom," were initiated; their name being a reflection of the fact that many members of this age grouping had refused to attend *bogwera*. They, in 1875, were followed by the "MaNtshwabisa," or "those who grieve me," whose title is said to echo Sechele's disappointment that they, too, had attended *bogwera*.[31] The 1881 regiment was graduated as the "MaLwelakgosi," "those who fought for the (future) Kgosi," a name given to them for their support of the future Sechele II's desire for *bogwera*. Finally, in 1888, there was the "MaLetantwa," or "those who saw the battle through," in the face of the high mortality rate among the *mephato* as well as strife over the refusal of Sebele's second son, Kebohula, to attend.

As the initiation controversy grew, its implications became increasingly severe. Before discussing historic meanings of *bogwera* and *bojale* one should begin with the observation that its ritual sequence has largely remained a mystery to non-participants. No graduates of these traditional schools are known to have ever violated taboo by giving a full and detailed account of his or her experiences, although some converts may have given missionaries information in confidence.[32] This secrecy, which may have become more rigid during the twentieth century in response to increased challenges to the institution, sets BaTswana apart from a number of other southern African groups that have provided

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30. Traditionally it was the duty of senior sons to see that their junior brothers were properly initiated: WCW/SO 804 biography of Maphakela Lekalake, pp. 6-8.

31. Another interpretation is that their name reflects Sechele's words of disappointment at the outcome of the battle of Mochudi, which coincided with their initiation.

32. Some limited information appears in "Khama's own Account of Himself" edit. by Neil Parsons *Botswana Notes and Records*, vol. 4 (1972), pp. 137-46: 144 (orig. document in WCW/SO 742.)

much fuller accounts. A handful of original articles by outsiders, nonetheless, purport to reveal elements of the ritual sequence.[33] Since the authors of the earliest articles were missionaries predisposed against the practice, their revelations are somewhat suspect.[34] What is clear is that *bogwera* and *bojale* were not merely rites of passage but an essential element of the social glue which held the *merafe* together around their *bogosi*.

It is through *bogwera* and *bojale* that the SeTswana *mephato* have been, and in a few places still are, formed. These regiments are organized horizontally by age, and thus cut across the boundaries between the various sub-divisions of a polity. Within their ranks a system of social hierarchy was maintained usually under the leadership of a prince or princess. During *bogwera* the actual circumcision process is, itself, sequenced in accordence with what thereafter forms the regiment's chain of command.[35]

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33. W.C. Willoughby "Notes on the initiation ceremonies of he Becwana." J.T. Brown "Circumcision Rites by Becwana tribes." Casalis, pp. 261-69. BNA PP 1/5/8 Lemue "Ceromonie de la Moyale ou Circumcision des filles chez lese Bachuanas." Schapera's own "A Native Lion Hunt in the Kalahari Desert" in *Man* vol. 32 (Dec. 1932); and *Bogwera* (Phuthadikobo Museum, Mochudi, 1975) deal with the reformed, non-secret, initiation revived by the Kgafela-BaKgatla with the sanction of the local D.R.C. mission during the 1920s. W.D. Hammond-Tooke *Bounderies and Belief, The Structure of a Sotho Worldview* (Witwatersrand U. Press, Johannesburg, 1981) offers a recent, detailed study based on restricted observation of initiation among the BaKgaga community of Northern Sotho who are linguistically and culturally related to BaTswana. (Not consulted F.J. Language "Die Bogwera van die Batlhaping" in *Tydskrif vir Wetenskap en Kuns* vol. 4 (1943), pp. 110-34.)

34. Indeed they were dismissed by British officials as simply sensationalist missionary polemics: BNA S. 190/6/1. The less sceptical may wish to consult Jean Comaroff *Body of Power Spirit of Resistance* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1985) Chapt. 4- pp. 78-120.

35. Among the BaKwena it is said that "BaKgalagadi" but not "BaSarwa" were initiated together with their BaKwena age mates, occupying the lowest ranks and siting at separate

Mepato have always been intruments of royal power. It is the Kgosi who commands their labor. Sechele's male *mephato* acted as soldiers, performed public works functions, hunted, and collected tribute. In terms of ideology and belief the rituals of *bogwera* were symbolic of the transformation of boys into men as social beings linked to the royal office as well as each other through their sense of collective rebirth. These bonds were inculcated through proverbial tales, praise-poetry and song, particularly the "Songs of the Law," as well as through, allegedly harsh, physical testing. It is also alleged that the Kgosi received the foreskins for his medicine horn.[36]

Sechele's conversion compromised the harmony of SeKwena society by dividing the community into initiates and non-initiates. Many leading families were split since they were over represented among the *BaKereke* or church going population. Traditionally male initiates were entitled to participate in public affairs. Sechele preserved the regimental system by placing non-initiates within appropriate *mephato* at the end of the *bogwera* cycle.[37] Despite this practical step the affiliation and ranking of the non-circumicsed remained open to question. Such placement meant that non-initiated princes assumed roles of leadership based on birthright over their initiated cousins and junior brothers, who potentially

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fires- Molepolole Historical Texts collected by Gaontatle Mautle in 1980 located in the Botswana Collection of the University of Botswana Library. Also Schapera *Tswana Law and Custom*, p. 104. BNA HC 24/24, however contain a letter by A.J. Wookey, to Shippard, Sept. 21, 1888, in which he states that "Bushmen" as well as "Makalahari" took part in the MaLetantwa's *bogwera*.

36. This information, from private sources, dovetails with Hammond-Tooke *Bounderies and Belief*, p. 40. Jean Comaroff's counter-assertion in *Body of Power, Spirit of Resistance*, p. 91, that the foreskins are simply discarded in the bush is not plausible.

37. BNA PP 1/1/10, Kwadira.

might try to undercut their authority. As long as the practice of *bogwera* persisted, the social position of those who had not attended remained unstable.

Conflict over *bogwera* and *bojale* also divided extended families over the issue of who had a right to determine whether a particular child attended or not. According to SeKwena law, the matter became one of free choice. Not so easily resolved was the persistent question of who had the right to make the choice. Was it the child? his or her siblings and parents? the aunts and uncles? or the lineage leaders? As a result of such doubts, the period immediately prior to the onset of initiation became a time of great tension in which charges and counter charges of kidnapping and forced attendance or abstinence were common. The situation was very often further complicated by the fact that once the initiation process had begun desertion and outside contact was strictly forbidden.

Given its apparent importance as a source of royal power it is perhaps surprizing that Sechele, unable to abolish the institution altogether, should have elected to distance his *bogosi* from *bogwera*. His brother Kgosidintsi certainly derived an enormous amount of power and prestige through his de facto responsibilty for the formation of the *mephato*. The resulting dichotomy of authority apparently worked well enough during the two brothers own lifetimes but helped to plant the seeds from which future political rivalries among their heirs could grow.

Finally with respect to both *bogwera* and *bojale* it should be noted that these "traditional" institutions were almost certainly not static in either their form or content. While their hidden character has made it impossible to trace such evolution as did occur, one development governing the ceremonies that is obvious, given the expansion of the BaKwena

polity, is a growth in scale. To initiate the adolescents within a *morafe* numbering a few hundred to work together is quite different from attempting to inculcate SeKwena values among the youth of a *morafe* numbering in the tens of thousands.

In summation throughout the mid-nineteenth century Sechele enhanced the centralized authority of his *bogosi* through his power of patronage as well as martial and jural leadership. SeKwena politics, nonetheless, continued to be largely governed through a system of diffused authority in which the heads of the *metse* and *meratswane*, in particular, existed as loci of autonomous authority. SeKwena society was also divided between the sometimes competing Sons of Kgabo and commoners on one hand and the exploited *malata* class, who for the most part served the former grouping as well as the Kgosi, on the other. Disputes over social ideology beween the BaKereke and "traditionalists," most especially with regard to initiation, were also emerging. The relative weakness of Sechele's constitutional position within Kweneng forms a partial context for the success and failure of his external policy, prior to 1885. Lacking imperial authority within Kweneng proper, he was not in a position to establish imperial jurisdiction elsewhere.

Part 2: Civil Wars

> "Sechele, chief of the Bakwena, is the Earl of Warwick of South Africa. He has spent all his life deposing and setting up chiefs, and has found it a profitable business, as the new chief always gave a good present—if he didn't, he was deposed again."—Alfred Bethell, 1887[38]

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38. Alfred Bethell *Notes on South African Hunting, and Notes on a Ride to the Victoria Falls of the Zambesi*, (Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo 1976 facsile reprint of 1887 original), p. 26

Throughout the 1870s much of Botswana was seriously disturbed by an outbreak of warfare among various *merafe*. These conflicts, which have been treated as isolated events within the various "tribal histories," are here collectively referred to as the "Civil Wars" to underscore their underlying linkages. These hostilities led to the loss of hundreds, perhaps if not thousands, of lives. In addition trade was disrupted, agricultural production declined, and many head of cattle were lost.

A major political outcome of the Civil Wars was the relative decline of Sechele's Kingdom and the rise a number new local powers. Among these the domain which waxed the strongest was that of the BaNgwato who were able to break free from a two decade cycle of BaKwena intrusion into their dynastic affairs. The BaKgatla bagaKgafela and BaLete, both *merafe* who had earlier sought Sechele's protection from Boer oppression, also emerged as independent polities during the period. In the process these latter two groups deprived the BaKwena, along with their BaNgwaketse allies, of control over large portions of the better watered grazing areas along the Transvaal border, that is the regions since known as Kgatleng and Gammalete. In addition the expansion of the tributory networks of both the BaKwena and BaNgwaketse into the western Kgalagadi were checked by independent BaRolong and BaTlharo communities who established their hegemony over the pans of Matsheng.[39] Thus by the time the British proclaimed their Protectorate between the Molopo river and the 22nd parallel in 1885, the entire area had only just completed a major transformation. Beyond its parochial impact on the BaKwena, this upheaval is important in that it had a lasting influence

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39. The Matsheng region includes the area around the villages of Hukuntsi, Lehututu, Lokgwebe, and Tshane. NB. This is not the same place as where Sechele took *bogosi* from Molese.

on settlement patterns throughout southern Botswana. The struggles also initially compromised the ability of the local *merafe* to act collectively in the face of the colonial challenge.

The origin of the name "BaTswana" has long been a subject of debate. According to one explanation it may be a derivation of *ba a tswana*, that is "those who come out of each other."[40] Another possibility is that it is a corruption of the expression *ba a tshwana* meaning "they are the same people" perhaps conveyed by the southern BaTlhaping to early European visitors who enquired about the nature of the peoples living immediately beyond them.[41] These two contradictory, but equally plausible, etymologies underscore the broader historic contradiction within SeTswana societies between integrating and disintegrating forces. As J.T. Brown has noted: "Just as ancient Greece consisted, not of one nation well knit together by one national aim, but a number of states of varying importance, oft warring against each other, as Sparta and Athens, yet sometimes combining forces against a common foe, as when the Persians attacked, so it is with the people called Bechuana."[42]

The Civil Wars of the 1870s were a product of the failure of the BaKwena and other western BaTswana to build a lasting concord on the foundation of their defensive alliance against the Boers. In this regard one must define "failure" as

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40. J.T. Brown *Among the Bantu Nomads* pp. 25-26. Brown translates the name as "the separatists."

41. Stow, p. 408; J.T. Brown *Among the Bantu Nomads* p. 25. Earliest known published account of name in John Barrow *A Voyage to Cochinchina in the Years 1792-1793 to which Is Appended an Account of a Journey made in the Years 1801 and 1802 to the Residence of the Chief of the Booshuana Nation* (London, 1806) who noted, p. 387, that neighboring Khoisan knew the "tribe" as the "Briquas" (from "Biri-kwe" or the "Goat people") but that they referred to themselves as "Booshuanas."

42. J.T. Brown *Among the Bantu Nomads* p. 204.

a matter of passive rather than active omission. There is little evidence of a movement or consciousness among the mid-nineteenth century BaTswana in favor of the formation of broader structures of political consensus. Between 1857 and 1872 the political centers of the eastern Kgalagadi were generally at peace with one another but they only cooperated sporadically, usually in order to maintain the commercial traffic, which connected their territories. This cooperation was characterized by elements of a endogenous diplomatic etiquette which suggests a very tenuous sense of pan-*merafe* communion. The nature of such mutual bonds provides a partial context for understanding the character of Sechele's statecraft during the period as well as the outbreak and progress of the Civil Wars.

In the years which immediately followed the Batswana-Boer War, Sechele dominated modern Botswana through an aggressive policy of diplomatic intrigue and occasional armed intervention. Through such means he aimed to establish his influence, rather than rule, over a wide area beyond his, at the time ambiguous, borders. The power and prestige he had acquired as a resistance leader, along with traditional BaKwena claims to seniority, facilitated his emergence as a regional power broker. Perhaps due to his own understanding of the weaknesses, his external actions were opportunistic rather than expansionistic. The power of the BaKwena state was used sparingly to successfully promote two overiding concerns: 1) to preserve the BaKwena positon in local commerce a time when the hunting frontier was being pushed further and further into the northern interior of the sub-continent and 2) to maintain peaceful relations within the Kweneng among and between its BaKwena core and the various *meratswane*.

Throughout the late nineteenth-century Sechele exploited his seniority, wealth, and marital ties in order to influence the dynastic politics of neighboring *merafe*.[43] Between 1852 and 1859 he, along with Montshiwa supported BaNgwaketse re-unification under the leadership of Gaseitsiwe over his rival Senthufe.[44] Subsequently the two "Great Crocodiles," and more especially their heirs Sebele and Bathoen, often cooperated.[45] This alliance was successfully tested during the conflict over the *bogosi* of the BagaMmanaana between Mosielele and Pilane.[46] The larger of the two factions, that of Pilane,

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43. Sechele's children and grand-children exchanged bridewealth w/ most of the significant SeSotho-Tswana dynasties from the BaKololo and BaTawana, in the north and west, to the BaRolong booSeleka of Thaba Ntsu, in the far south-east see: BoSechele genealogy collected by Schapera (to be catalogued) in BNA PP. Also Letsholathebe I's marriage to daughter of Sechele (possibly Kereboletswe) in Chapman, vol. 2, pp. 57, 167, 172, 178.

44. After a period of uneasy, BaKwena and BaRolong encouraged, co-existence at Kanye, Gasietsiwe defeated Senthufe in a power struggle in 1857. From 1857-59 Senthufe lived under the protection of Sechele who helped negotiate his return as a Kgosana under his former rivals authority. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kwadira Lesele. BNA S 3/1 Tiro Motlhabani. Molema *Montshiwa*, p. 51. *Mokaeri oa Becuana*, vol. 1, no. 4 (January 1858), p. 16. Robert Moffat *Matebele Journals*, vol. 2, p. 146.

45. Following based on interviews with Kgosi Letlole, June 13, 1985 at Thamaga; Kobedi Seribe, Aug. 5, 1985 at Mmankgodi; Mose Mose, K. Kowa, S.S. Mookgodi, August 13, 1985 at Mosopa; Victoria Namane, March 31, 1986 at Tlokweng; Batheon Gasietsiwe, October 28, 1986 at Gaborone; Mokgothuotsile Kgabo, August 18, 1985, and Ratlou Ketshabile, Oct. 11, 1985, at Molepolole. Also BNA S. 3/1, Tiro Motlhabani. BNA PP 1/1/10 Gokatweng; & PP 1/4/14 Mookodi, Masisi, and Mokalake. BPP C. 2220 no. 17, 1878, "Bailie Report." B.M. Tselaesele "Bakgatla-ba-ga-Mmanaana," (Univ. of Botswana Fourth Year History Research Essay, 1978.)

46. Pilane (1843-1889) along with his younger brother Gobuamang (1845-1940) were born of Mosielele and Kanyane Mongala, the widow of Mosielele's elder brother Kgosi Pheko, in accordance with the custom of *seantlo*. Thus Mosielele was considered the regent of Pilane the putative son of Pheko. When Pilane came of age Mosielele proved reluctant to give up the throne although Pilane's birthright was never, itself, in dispute.

who at the time was married to Sechele's daughter, Gagoangwe, removed to Kgabodukwe (near Molepolole), where they remained under BaKwena protection from 1870-76. At the same time Mosielele took his minority to permanently resettle among the BaNgwaketse who were his maternal relatives.[47] In response to this crisis Sechele and Gaseitsiwe agreed to establish a common border approximately halfway between their two capitals, that is between Molepolole and Kanye. The two diKgosi subsequently succeeded in having their boundary demarcated by British mediators in 1880, that is five years before the establishment of the Protectorate.[48] Prior to this understanding, which coincided with, and was allegedly connected to, Gagoangwe's desertion of Pilane for the hand of Bathoen, the BaKwena had claimed Poloko hill (just north of Kanye) as their southern boundary.[49] BaKwena as well as BaKgatla evidence holds that Sechele had intrusted the land to Gagoangwe.[50]

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47. The descendents of Mosielele's party have ever since formed the Gamafikana or Kgatleng section of Kanye.

48. BNA PP 1/3/2 "Report of the Commission appointed on he 9h of April, 1880 by H.E. Sr William Owen Lanyon."

49. Interviews w/ Letlole, June 13, & Aug. 12, 1985; Mose, Kowa and Mookgodi, Aug. 13, 1985; Mokgothuotsile Kgabo, Aug. 14, 1985 and Ratlou Ketshabile, Oct. 11, 1985. BNA uncatalogued DCMol file- CF/24 "Bakwena/Bangwakese border," July 27, 1962 (Testimony of) J.S. Mhiko, Tolo Sebosigo, K. Legwale and Martinsi Seboni. BNA S. 155/18, Rev. Reyneke to R.C. May 8, 1933. Also "Moitse-dilo" in *Mahoko a Becwana*, Dec. 1, 1883. LMS J.T. Brown, Jan. 1; and Feb. 29, 1896.

50. The connection between royal marriage politics and access to land is further underscored by the subsequent marriage between Pilane's heir Baiterile and Sebele's daughter Kudubane, as event which led to a new grant of grazing rights within Kweneng to the BagaMmanaana- BNA DC Kanye 5/1. Kudumane's deserted husband, Tswene Mosinye, thereafter married Khama III's daughter Pidio and was, himself, apparently promised land at Shoshong- PP 1/1/10 Gokatweng, Basutli, Phutegelo, and Kalayamore.

Throughout the second half of his reign Sechele was preoccupied with affairs to his north.[51] On four seperate occasions he orchestrated the overthrow of the BaNgwato head of state, while twice his *mephato* temporarily seized control of Shoshong, the Gammangwato capital. A motivating factor behind this meddling was the shift of hunting activity northward into the interior of central Africa. This development meant that continued BaKwena access to ivory from the Chobe-Zambezi region and beyond could be challenged by the strategically located and rapidly expanding BaNgwato state, which had prospered under the rule of Sekgoma I through its own participation in the ivory trade.

Sechele launched his first coup in 1857, when he delivered the BaNgwato *bogosi* to Macheng. The details of this particular episode illustrate something of the diplomatic norms that shaped inter-state relations, while at the same time providing a prime example of the Mokwena's adept use of his missionaries to further his secular interests.

Since his kidnapping during the 1842 AmaNdebele raid on Shokwane, Macheng had remained a captive of Umzilagazi. He was now a young man of about twenty-six years. Only his circumstance stood between the orphan of Kgari, begotten by Sedimo, and his throne, for among the BaNgwato his legitimacy,

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51. There are a relatively large number of sources, both contemporary and more recent, which address the complex history of 19th century BaKwena-BaNgwato relations, which therefore will only be outlined here. For a comprehensive analysis of the period in the context of BaNgwato development see Neil Parsons "Khama III, the Bamangwato and the British," chapter one. Also Tlhabologo Kooagile "Relations between the Bakwena and Bangwato c.1830-1890," (Univ. Botswana Fourth Year Research Essay, 1976.) Principal primary sources include: WCW/SO 742 "Khama," 795 "BaNgwato;" LMS. various correspondence of period; the journals of Robert Moffat and of Elizabeth Price as well as John MacKenzie *Ten Years North of the Orange River*. (Edmonston & Douglas, Edinburgh, 1871).

and thus seniority over his uncle Sekgoma, had remained unquestioned despite the fact that his mother had fled to the BaKwena. Sechele had a moral responsibility to Macheng having been his guardian as well as brother-in-law at the time of his capture. John Mackenzie summed up the situation thus:

> "As guardian from whom he had been taken captive, Sechele, the chief of the Bakwena, had some natural regret at the loss of his relative. The desire to free him was increased also by another kind of motive. The Bakwena taking precedence of the Bamangwato as to rank, it is the life-long endevour of Sechele to obtain such influence in the town of the Bamangwato as would enable him to secure some of the treasures of ivory and ostrich feathers and furs which are brought from its extensive hunting-grounds, extending northward to the Zambese."[52]

Robert Moffat understood the situation when he agreed to Sechele's request that he seek Macheng's release, during his upcoming visit with Umzilagazi.[53] Rumors of Macheng's impending release spread like a bushfire across the countryside long before the missionary had reached the kraal of the ageing Umzilgazi. At Shoshong Sekgoma was ill at ease. He met Moffat, "with a not very steady voice," exclaiming: "What are my people wondering about? Do they not know Macheng is my younger brother? Why should I wish not to see him?"[54] It was understood that the Kgosi was speaking with his tongue and not his heart, indeed the very thought of Macheng's return is said to have thrown him into a "bilious fever." In December 1857 Umzilagazi, having also been approached by a second emissary of Sechele's, in addition to Moffat, informed Macheng:

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52. John MacKenzie *Ten Years North of the Orange River*, p. 361.

53. Moffat was enroute to Matebeleland to smooth the way for he establishment of an L.M.S. mission there under his son. By this time the Missionary's famous "friendship" with the AmaNdebele King was already 30 years old.

54. Robert Moffat *Matebele Journals*, vol. 2, p. 44.

> "We have arranged concerning you. Moshete (i.e. Moffat) will take you back to Sechele. It was from him that you were taken in war. I will send two men to accompany you, to state to Sechele that it was my wish, and that of Moshete that you be restored to the person from whom you were taken. When captured, you were a child. I have reared you to be a man."[55]

Macheng received a gun and European style clothing before being sent, under Moffat's care, to the court of Sechele.[56] Though he traveled through Gammangwato he made only a brief, evening, visit to Shoshong, despite the excitement generated there by his presence. Custom, as well as Umzilagazi, dictated that he be restored to his guardian, who could then bring him before the BaNgwato. An entourage of fifty to sixty BaNgwato led by Tshukudu, however, joined him on his journey. Sechele, accompanied by Gaseitsiwe and Montshiwa, greeted the party as they approuched his capital, then at Dithubaruba. On January 18, 1858, "the largest native parliament ever witnessed by any one of the six or seven thousand who attended" gathered to officially welcome Macheng, now wearing a blue officers uniform and Sechele's brass helmet, back "from the land of bondage." Leading members of the independent *merafe* and *meratswane* south of Gammangwato attended.[57] In accordance with the SeTswana practice of *atswa* the diKgosi welcomed Macheng into their ranks by giving him cattle. They also took the opportunity to address other

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55. Moffat *Matebele Journals*, vol. 2, pp. 135-37. Moffat's impression was that Sechele's second emissary only complicated his task by creating the hope in Umzilagazi that the Mokwena would visit him bearing a ransom.

56. Moffat *Matebele Journals*, vol. 2, p. 140-47.

57. Moffat was not slow in appreciating the advantages of this situation noting, *Matebele Journals*, vol. 2, p. 142, "On the sabbath all the services devolved on me to overflowing congregations, which afforded me an excellent opportunity of advising all the chief men of the different towns on the great truths of the Bible."

matters of common concern such as the then recent showdown between Gaseitsiwe and Senthufe.

Macheng then returned to Shoshong accompanied by Tshukudu and a modest sized party led by Kgosidintsi. He was immediately proclaimed Kgosi. The family of Sekgoma, including most notably his sons Khama and Khamane, thereafter went into exile at Dithubaruba.[58] Meanwhile Sechele is reported to have "received a very handsome present in ivory and other valuables" from Macheng.[59] Shortly thereafter Sechele also visited, Umzilagazi where he was further rewarded with 40 oxen, 40 sheep, 40 goats and some ivory.[60]

Macheng's installation proved but an opening act in an extended drama. He soon alienated Tshukudu and other supporters with his penchant for autocracy and drinking.[61] As a result Tshukudu arranged with Sechele for the restoration of Sekgoma, which was implemented by BaKwena regiments under Kgosidintsi's command.[62] For their part the BaKwena are said to have "returned to their homes with with a pretty large booty of cattle." Macheng initially fled to the BaSeleka but,

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58. *Mokaeri oa Bechuana*, vol. 1, no. 8 (May 1858).

59. MacKenzie *Ten Years North of the Orange River*, p. 362.

60. Baldwin, p. 290. Also *Mokaeri oa Bechuana*, vol. 1, no. 7, (April 1858). On a follow up visit the next year Sechele is said to have impressed his host with his sermons which, as Chirenje has pointed out, stands in contrast to the initially cool reception received by the L.M.S. missionaries who arrived among the AmaNdebele later that same year- MacKenzie *Ten Years North of the Orange River*, p. 319. Chirenje *A History of Northern Botswana*, p. 72.

61. According to MacKenzie, letter to Tidman, March 19, 1866 published in A.J. Dachs, edit., *Papers of John MacKenzie*, (Witwatersrand Univ. Press, Johannesburg 1975) p. 27, Macheng declared all property to be his and had a Kgosana executed. WCW/SO 795, testimony of RraDaniela, e.g. drink.

62. *Mokaeri oa Becuana*, vol. 2, no. 20, (May 1959) which reports that between 20-30 of Macheng's men and 10 BaKwena were killed in battle. Robert Moffat *Matebele Journals*, vol. 2, pp. 180, 184, 189, 225, 261. MacKenzie to Tidman March 19, 1866 in Dachs, p. 28.

after failing in his appeal for support from Umzilagazi, later accepted refuge at Sechele's.[63]

The counter-coup of 1859 helped to evangelize the BaNgwato for Sekgoma's restoration was accompanied by the establishment of the Hermannsburg and, three years latter in 1862, L.M.S. missions at Shoshong.[64] Khama and Khamane had already been attracted to the church during their exile in Kweneng. Conflicting views soon emerged between the Kgosi and his senior sons over the role of the new religion should play within SeNgwato society. In 1866 these disagreements escalated into a short civil war. As a result Macheng, at the invitation of Sekgoma, and with the backing of Sechele, was restored to the throne.[65] Soon thereafter Sekgoma failed in a plot to have his sons and Macheng murdered, causing him to flee once more to Kweneng, where he settled at Mmankgodi.[66]

During his second reign, Macheng again alienated his supporters. Like Sekgoma before him he could not work with Khama and Khamane's "Christian" party. His unsuccessful attempts to influence AmaNdebele politics also led to a

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63. Sechele sent an embassy under Pule to Umzlagazi were they apparently reached an understanding.

64. The two missions co-existed until 1864 when the Hermannsburg mission closed down.

65. Thomas Leask, pp. 50-52. MacKenzie *Day-Dawn in Dark Places* (Cassells, London 1883), pp. 255-65. Tshukudu who had championed the cause of Khama and Khamane, who were by now his son-in-laws, fled to Sechele who had him "secretly" murdered for reasons which have not been fully established. The conversion of Khama and Khamane had initially dovetailed with Tshukudu's ambitions since their new faith prevented the princes from taking additional wives favored by Sekgoma.

66. According to Maphakela Lekalake, WCW/SO 804 "Ordination Papers of Native Students," Sechele and Sekgoma feared and often tried to avoid one another because they had been instructed and were equally able in the use of "medicine" and charms having both been students of Maphakela's grandfather Moitsheki.

poisoning of his relations with their new Nkosi, Lobengula.[67] In 1871 Macheng began to interfere with BaKwena-AmaNdebele trade and communication. In response Lobengula sent a letter to Sechele calling upon him to "send your son or some other important persons" for consultations.[68] Sechele was thus receptive to Khama and Khamane's entreaties to help remove Macheng.[69] The Paramount Kgosi declared:

> "There will be no peace in the country while either Sekgome or Macheng is chief of the Bamangwato. I shall assist Khame to obtain the chieftainship for himself, in the hope that permanent peace will be established and that my people may have a free road to hunt and trade in the wide country north of Shoshong."[70]

The BaKwena, in a *letsholo* meeting, agreed to assist in the overthrow of Macheng in return for a payment of £ 1,000 to cover their expenses which included 100 bags of gunpowder.[71] On August 29, 1872 Sebele, accompanied by Kgosidintsi, led the BaKwena regiments and Khama's rebels on a dawn assault on

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67. After the death of Umzilagazi in 1868 Macheng backed an individual who claimed to be Nkulumane ("Kuruman"), the long absent senior brother of Lobengula who was supposed to have been killed on Umzilagazi's orders. The BaNgwato and AmaNdebele also came into conflict over the ownership of the Tati goldfields.

68. T. Bains *The Northern Goldfields Diaries of Thomas Bains* edited by J.P.R. Wallis (3 vols., Chatto & Windus, London 1946) vol. 3 p. 700. Also his *The Gold Regions of South-Eastern Africa*, (Edward Standford, London, JWC McKay, Cape Town 1877), p. 48.

69. The following account of 1872 events is based on LMS MacKenzie to Dr. Mullens, Sept. 2, 1872, also published in Dachs, pp. 33-39 and J.D. Hepburn *Twenty Years in Khama's Country*, (Hodder & Stoughton, London 1895.) Khamane initially approached Sebele. He also approached Sekgoma who was now living at Kanye but neither he nor his BaNgwaketse hosts wished to become involved.

70. LMS Mackenzie to Mullens, Sept. 2, 1872.

71. Rodger Price to MacKenzie, Oct. 29, 1872, published in Dachs, pp. 39-40. After the "revolution" the two missionaries arbitrated a dispute between Sechele and Khama over the payment.

Shoshong. They quickly routed all opposition, while suffering only two casualties. In the process much of Shoshong, including its grain reserves, was torched. Macheng's life was spared but his leading councillors and bodyguards were executed.[72] Khama, to the chagrin of Sechele, shortly thereafter surrendered the throne to his father. Matters remained unstable. Khamane broke with the church and allied himself with Sekgoma and the "traditionalists" against his elder brother. Then in a decisive showdown, in January 1875, Khama seized the chair, which he kept until his death in 1923. Sekgoma and Khamane naturally fled to the ever welcoming Sechele.[73]

Khama's final triumph, and subsequent strong rule, ended for good the BaKwena influence over the the BaNgwato. It also coincided with the beginning of the period of Civil Wars in southern Botswana, which soon confirmed that the era of Sechele's regional predominance had ended. Althoug the BaKwena and BaNgwato did not fight one another, for the next half century, that is during the remaining lifetime of Khama, a state of mutual hostility often clouded their bilteral relations. At first the young Phuti was obliged to remain wary of the old fox in Kweneng. By the time of the Warren Expedition, Sechele had married Macheng's widow and was sympathetic to the royal claims of her son Kgari Macheng.[74] Later the fox's son and successor, Sebele, who would have

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72. Macheng lived for a number of years thereafter in the Transvaal.

73. They were allowed to return to Gammangwato c. 1880 despite attempts by Khamane in 1876 to overthrow his brother with the assistance of Boer trekkers. Sekgoma d. 1883. Khamane's off an on struggle with Khama lasted until 1909.

74. BNA H.C. 5/34 Lt. Bethall, April 25, 1886. *Mahoko a Bechuana* Dec. 1885. LMS Wookey, Dec. 1, 1885 & July 21, 1886, and Lloyd, May 6, 1886. Joseph Wood *Through Matebeleland, Ten Months in a Wagon* (Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1972 reprint of 1893 original) pp. 158-59.

reason to fear that his own *bogosi* was being jeopardized by Khama's machinations. But these were post-Civil Wars developments. After the 1870's Shoshong was able to reassert its control over the trade routes and hunting grounds to its north. This development coincided with, and was possibly facilated by, the emergence of new challenges to BaKwena hegemony from within Kweneng itself.

The Civil Wars which gripped southern Botswana from 1875 were an outgrowth of of the tenuous nature of the BaKwena confederacy. During the previous decade the ties that existed between the various *meratswane* communities and Sechele's paramountcy had loosened considerably. In 1865 the Paramount Kgosi, in response to the improved security situation, congestion, and the depleted resources at Dithubaruba, moved his capital to the better watered, more accessible, and still quite defensible, site of Molepolole.[75] Simultaneously several of the larger *meratswane* moved to the outer, south-east, margin of the Kweneng, where they could enjoy a greater degree of de facto independence. Of these, the BaKgatla bagaMmanaana and the BaLete, who were accompanied by the BaHurutse booMotshibidu, refused to pay token tribute to Sechele as a sign of continued allegiance.[76] The defiance of these three communities did not immediately lead to conflict, even though they continued to support the Hermannsburg mission in the face of the restoration of the L.M.S. among the

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75. Thomas Leask, p. 22. Gustav Fritsch *DreiJahre*, pp. 337-8. The movement away from Dithubaruba had begun in 1863, while the main party of BaKwena had established itself at Molepolole in the austral-winter of 1865.

76. Vivian Ellenberger "Di Robaroba Matlhakola tse ga Masodi-a-Mphela (A History of the Ba-ga-Malete of Ramoutsa)" *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa* vol. 25, no. 4 (1937), p. 46. Additional information on BaHurutse in BNA PP 1/2/8, B.S. Morebodi, B.L. Thobega, Ranku Esau, Moswang Lerato, also PP 1/1/10-11, Phuthegelo.

BaKwena.[77] The removals, themeselves, were not seen as overt acts of rebellion but rather the colonization of abandoned or underutilized countryside. Before his own departure Mosielele, addressing Sechele, is reported to have said: "I am a tortoise, I go to the salt pans," by which he meant that his people needed to go where they would have better access water.[78] Sechele's stewardship over land, including of grazing and hunting rights, throughout Kweneng was maintained.[79] It was nonetheless becoming clear that a mouse had begun to grow in the calabash of the BaKwena elephant.

The immediate cause of the Civil Wars was the migration of several thousand BaKgatla bagaKgafela refugees under Kgosi Kgamanyane into the eastern Kweneng in 1870.[80] Like earlier migrants, the newcomers had found Boer rule intolerable. For over two decades Kgamanyane had, in fact, personally prospered by collaborating with the settlers, supplying them with farm workers and auxiliaries for their military campaigns. While Kgamanyane accumulated dozens of wives his people suffered under the one they praised as the "the Rebuker" (Kgalemi):

> *"he said 'Cave split and let me hide.'*
> *We who're outside flee from the Rebuker, we've fled*
> *from the Rebuker, Pilane's son;*

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77. The L.M.S. was subsequently able to gain control of the BaKgatla and BaHurutshe churches but the Lutherans have continued as the leading "historic" church among the BaLete.

78. BNA S. 155/8 Testimony of Gobuamang, April 7, 1932. Interview w/Letlole, Dec. 12, 1985, supports the contention that the need for water was the critical factor in many of the removals. In BNA S. 155/10 Ratsie Sebonego, however, claims that Mosielele and Sechele also argued as to whether Pilane should be circumcised among the BaKwena.

79. BNA H.C. 2/7/12 Stokes to Warren March 26, 1885, notes that the *meratswane* "are not allowed to hunt in the Kalahari, as Montsiwe, Gaseitsiwe, Sechele and Khama are alone considered to have rights to hunting grounds there."

80. LMS Rodger Price, Nov. 30, 1870.

he seizes cattle, he seizes people too, the Famed One also seizes young children, he seizes infants still at the brest;
but the infants he seizes he does not keep, he gives them to the white (literally red) men."[81]

In April of 1870 Kgamanyane, claiming that he had "only old men left," refused to provide additional corvee. In response, Paul Kruger had him lashed to a wagon wheel and sjamboked before a large assembly. Humiliated and under the threat of new demands and restrictions, the now rebuked one took the core of his community to Kweneng which the Transvaal BaTswana then also called Botshabelo, "the place of Refuge." It was not a complete exodus in that a significant number of the BaKgatla remained behind in the Pilanesburg.[82]

In November, the refugees received permission to settle along the Ngotwane river at Mochudi.[83] Reportedly a document was signed by Kgamanyane, witnessed by Rodger Price, in which he recognized Sechele as the owner of the land.[84] Despite his welcome it soon became obvious that BagaKgafela had not come as a proverbial small elephant but rather as "vultures from the Transvaal," who encrouched upon BaKwena pastures and stole cattle whose ears had been marked with the mouth of the

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81. Schapera *Praise Poems*, p. 68.

82. The Pilanesburg, named after Kgamanyane's father Pilane, has remained the homeland of the Transvaal BagaKgafela who still recognize the Kgosi of Mochudi as their traditional authority see- F. Morton "Chiefs and Ethnic Unity in Two Colonial Worlds: the Bakgatla baga Kgafela of the Bechuanaland Protectorate and the Transvaal, 1872-1966" in A.I. Asiwaju (edit.) *Partitioned Africans: Ethnic Relations across Africa's International Boundaries, 1884-1984* (C.Hurst, London 1985), pp. 127-154.

83. LMS Price, November 30, 1870. It was the site where Sechele's ancestor, Kgosi Motshudi, had been buried. According to Majaasuma Matlhabani, interviewed Oct. 8, 1985, Sechele was matrilineally related to the Kgafela royals.

84. BNA PP 1/3/2 "Report of the Commission appointed on the 9th of April, 1880 by H.E. Sir William Owen Lanyon."

crocodile.[85] From the beginning Mochudi emerged as an armed camp with its major wards, *kgoro* in SeKgatla, clustered together amidst the outcroppings of Phutadikobo hill.[86] In 1873 Kgamanyane's heir, Linchwe, was initiated at the head of a regiment ominously named Matlakana, the "Vultures".[87] Even before this *bogwera* an armed clash had occured at Motlabatsi where one of Sechele's "MoKgalagadi" subjects had refused to surrender a slain buffalo to some BaKgatla. This incident resulted in two deaths.[88]

After Kgamanyane's death, in May 1875, the already tense situation worsened. No sooner had the Kgosi's corpse been sent away for burial in the Transvaal, lest the BaKwena get a hold of its power, than Linchwe assisted a BaTlako Kgosana, Moetlo, in raiding Sechele's cattle post at Dikgoi on the Ngotwane.[89] The stolen cattle were driven into the Transvaal for safe keeping. Though Sechele recovered his beasts through the cooperation of the SAR, the smuggling of stolen cattle across the border became increasingly common. Accompanying the Dikgoi

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85. BNA Minutes of Native Advisory Council, March 16-17, 1925, Sekgoma II to Isang and others on his refusal to join the Council: "There are only three real Chiefs in this country. We are not vultures from the Transvaal come to take a place here and there!"

86. Early descriptions of Mochudi in Parker Gilmore, *The Land of the Boer, or adventures in Natal, the Transvaal, Basutoland and Zululand* (Cassell, Peter & Galpin, London) p. 244; A.A. Anderson, p. 143; and Holub *Seven Years*, vol. 2, p. 424.

87. DRC 15/7/2(A) Gonin, April 17, 1873. BNA PP 1/5/13.

88. BNA PP 1/1/10 Phuthegelo supported by PP 1/3/2 "Lanyon Commission" and BNA H.C. 93/29 Report by Goold-Adams, March 5, 1888.

89. Dikgoi raid and aftermath- BNA PP 1/1/10, Phuthegelo, Kalayamore and Gokatweng; and HC 93/29 Goold-Adams, March 5, 1888. LMS Charles Williams, Jan. 17, 1876. BPP C. 2220 (also in PRO 879/14/162) Sechele to Osborn, June 21, 1878. State Archives, Pretoria TA SS V.R 287/79 Shepstone to Frere, Nov. 4, 1879.

attack was the theft of the "Dirobakgang" herd of Mmupi and other other smaller losses.[90]

For the Boers as well as the BaKwena these developments underscored the mutual need for the two states to more clearly define their respective jurisdictions.[91] At the time the entire border area was falling under the de facto control of the BaLete, BaTlako, Batlokwa, and Modimotsane-BaKwena (Motlhako) as well as the Kgafela-BaKgatla. Each of these groups were becoming increasingly "lawless" to the authority of both Pretoria and Molepolole. But mistrust permeated the Kweneng-SAR relationship. Despite nearly two decades of relatively cordial relations their boundary remained undemarcated. This fact was made all the more menacing for the BaKwena by the persistent, though unenforced, pretensions of the SAR to suzeraintry over "the whole country of West Bechuana north of the Orange River as far as a line joining Lake Ngami and the Langeburg."[92] Pretoria's expansionist ambitions had in fact been a causal factor in the removal of the Hermannsburg Mission and the restoration of the L.M.S. in 1864-66. Among the men who sat at Kgosing the presence of British missionaries and traders, as well as the periodic appearance of various international visitors from such exotic lands as Austria, France and the United States, were clearly valued as a counterweight to the socio-economic pre-eminence

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90. BNA PP 1/1/10 Phuthegelo, Kalaymore & Gokotweng.

91. Diplomatic exchanges over the issue had commenced by 1874 if not earlier: BPP C. 2220 dispatch by Balie, October, 2, 1876.

92. PRO CO 879/10/107 Proclamation by President M.W. Pretorius, published in the *Staats-Courant* April 29, 1868.

of the *Maburu*.[93] The colonization of easternmost Kweneng by recalcitrant groups, whom the SAR claimed as its subjects, thus introduced potential for either renewed conflict or cooperation across the Madikwe.

In August 1875 Sechele sent all seven of the *mephato* he had up until then graduated to attack Mochudi. In ordering the assault the Kgosi was guided by the majority of his Kgotla who, led by Sebele, were incensed by the cattle losses and clamored for the chance to teach the ape totemists a lesson. A possible factor in the timing of the attack may have been the youth and disputed legitmacy of Kgamanyane's uncrowned successor, Linchwe. Sechele reportedly demanded a renewal of token tribute payments (*dikgafela*), proposing one "muid" of sorghum, in order to forestall possible Boer claims to the area.[94] The missionary Charles Williams, however, believed that the the tribute issue had been raised as part of "a blind to cover his real design which was to expel the Bakgagahele (i.e. BagaKgafela) and to capture all their cattle."[95] As it was a peace mission led by Kgosidintsi, who was himself in favor of reconciliation, was sent to Mochudi but failed to convince the BaKgatla to acknowledge BaKwena overrule. Kgosidintsi then advised Sechele to hold off attacking until the rains so that the BaKwena cattle could be driven from the eastern Kweneng.[96] Sechele instead opted to send additional cattle towards the

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93. In this respect Emil Holub of Prague, although apparently the first "Oostrien" that the Kgosi had encountered, underestimated the cosmopolitanism of his host when he claimed of Sechele, in 1873, that "the only white men that he knew were Englishman, whom he liked, and Boers, whom he did not like."- Holub, vol. 1, p. 322. Indeed one BaTlokwa regiment was, c. 1853, named MaPotokisi, the Portuguese, based on Sechele's descriptions of said people- BNA PP 1/5/13.

94. BPP C. 2220 Dispatch from Bailie, Nov. 6, 1876. A dry muid could represent anywhere from 52 to 110 bushels.

95. L.M.S. Charles Williams, Jan. 17, 1876.

96. BNA PP 1/1/10 Phuthegelo.

Limpopo to lull the BaKgatla into thinking that no attack was imminent.[97]

Under Sebele's command the strike force left Molepolole on the Monday following Kgosidintsi's return. On Thursday the force returned badly defeated having left between sixty and ninety of their comrades on the battlefield. Among the fallen was Sechele's brother Kgafela and many other leading citizens. In their underestimation of the BaKgatla defences, the BaKwena struck like the bustard that "sees the egg but not the trap."[98] The Mochudi settlers had, moreover, benefited from the intelligence they received from spies, such as Molefe Ratsisi, who dwelled among Letsebe's BagaKgafela then living at Molepolole.[99] The reverse was a serious blow to the power and prestige of the BaKwena. In addition it particularly tarnished the reputation of Sebele who had been among the first to take flight: *"There was Sebele running quickly, wearing neither a blanket nor loinskin; he even took a pumpkin leaf for a girdle, but it did not fit him well,*'[100]

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97. For the same reason Sechele is also said to have sent the MaNtsewabisi initiates to their *bogwera* camp only to have them immediately recalled. Detailed descriptions of the battle: (BaKgatla) BNA PP 1/1/1-2, testimony of Isang Pilane, Phiri, and Segogoane; and (BaKwena) PP 1/1/10 Phuthegelo, Kalayamore & Gokatweng.

98. SeKgatla proverb/battle cry: *"Kgori ebone lee, lerapo gaelebone"*- see Schapera *Praise-Poems*, p. 88. Also BNA S. 155/10, testimony of Matubi.

99. LMS Charles Williams, Jan. 17, 1876 who notes the failure of the BaKwena apprehend the culprits; BNA PP 1/1/10 Kayamore and Gokatweng. At he time of the battle Letsebe fled with most of his people to Mochudi.

100. Schapera *Praise-Poems*, Linchwe's praise p. 91. Non-BaKgatla references to Sebele's evident cowardice- BPP C. 2220, Balie dispatch, Nov. 6, 1876 and report, May 17, 1877. Elizabeth Price, pp. 451, 457. Lloyd, pp. 249-251. (BaKwena accounts and poetry are silent about Sebele's humiliation.)

Sometime in November a second battle was fought near Thamaga, then the location of the fortified kraal of Pilane's Mmanaana-BaKgatla, then still junior allies of the BaKwena.[101] On this occasion the BagaKgafela were overwhelmed by the BagaMmanaana warriors under Pilane's brother Gobuamang. Some forty of the BagaKgafela were killed. Notable among the fallen was Maganelo, Linchwe's older half-brother, then a potential challenger to his succession.[102]

In the aftermath of the Battle of Thamaga, the relationship between Pilane and Sechele soured. The reason for this development is ambiguous. Alleged BagaMmanaana cattle raiding against the BaKwena is one explanation.[103] Another is that Pilane's estranged wife, Gagoangwe, told her father, Sechele, that spies from Mochudi were visiting the BagaMmanaana settlement at Kgabodukwe.[104] It is also alleged that Sechele called upon Pilane to deliver up the head of Maganelo for his medicine horn and that Pilane refused.[105] Still other sources claim that Pilane left Kgabodukwe simply

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101. DRC 15/7/2(A) Gonin, Dec. 18, 1875. Interview with Letlole, Aug 12, 1985. BNA PP 1/1/10 Gokatweng & Kalayamore and PP 1/1/1-2 Pilane. Also S. 155/8 Testimony of Ketshwerweemang.

102. Linchwe was recognized as the senior son of Kgamanyane's Mogumagadi a magolo, Maganelo was an ardent Christian. It has been alleged that the fallen pretender had been setup- BNA PP 1/1/10 Kalayamore and Gokatweng. At any rate in Maganelo's wake Linchwe was formally installed as Kgosi.

103. BNA S. 155/10 Ratlhaudi: "They were raiders (senokwane) of the Bakwena. When they went cattle-raiding with the Bakwena and captured the cattle, if they found themselves more in number than the Bakwena, they would attack and kill them. They went on in this way until Sechele realized what was happening and drove them away." Also interview w/ Sengwato Mokgadi, Sept. 9, 1989.

104. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kalayamore and Phuthegelo.

105. Tselaesele, p. 36.

to return to the superior defensive position of Mosopa.[106] What is certain is that tensions had arisen between Pilane, Sebele and Gagoangwe. Years later Sebele II simply stated that the BagaMmanaana "refused to be ruled by Sechele I."[107] So in 1876, for whatever reason, the community at Kgabodukwe returned to Mosopa, where they accepted limited Bangwaketse overule.[108]

The third and last big battle in the war between Linchwe and Sechele was fought in the outskirts of Molepolole in July 1876. By this time the BagaKgafela had allied with the neighboring BaTlokwa, Modimotsane-BaKwena, BaTlako and BaLete.[109] These groups, joined by additional rustlers from the Mosetla and Kgafela-BaKgatla communities of the Transvaal. launched a massive raid against the cattleposts west of Molepolole. Linchwe then tried to drive his spoils through the Borakalalo valley, just below Molepolole hill. The BaKwena, fortified with a fresh procurement of breech loading rifles, and the exiled Sekgoma I's "war medicine," had the bustard in a trap of their own. For the BaKwena it was a decisive victory. They recaptured most of their cattle at a loss of only two, whereas between fifty and a hundred of the invaders were slaughtered before Sechele ordered a cease fire. Linchwe,

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106. Interviews with Letlole, July 17, 1985 and Aug. 12, 1985; Mose, Kowa and Mookgodi, Aug. 13, 1985. BNA S. 155/10, testimony of Gobuamang. Mosielele had in fact died in 1873 removing the motive for the site's original abandonment.

107. BNA D.C.Mol. 5/20/3 Sebele II to R.M., Sept. 4, 1930.

108. BPP C. 2220 "Balie Report etc," confirms that this move had occured by October of 1876. Balie also largely confirms the long held contention of the BaNgwaketse that Pilane had agreed to live as Gaseitsiwe's "little elephant." Also BNA S. 415/5 "Kaga Kgaogano ea Bakgatla mo Ga-Moshupa".

109. Holub, *Seven Years*, vol. 2, pp. 30-31, 423. BNA 1/10/11, Kalayamore & Gokatweng. Interviews w/ Sengwato Mokgadi, Sept. 9; and Ratlou Ketsabile, Nov. 10, 1985. Also V. Ellenberger "A History of the BaTlokwa of Gaberones" in *Bantu Studes*, vol. 13, (1939), pp. 165-98, p. 181.

himself, narrowly avoided a premature rendezvous with his ancestors.

Following the battle at Borakalalo the *merafe* north of Molopo were deeply divided. On one side stood the BaKwena and the BaNgwaketse who, despite peroidic threats to launch a combined offensive, for the most part confined themselves to their own territories. This alliance of the Crocodiles was opposed by the Kgafela-BaKgatla, BaTlokwa, and BaLete. A third group of local *meratswane* and Transvaal BaTswana communities alternated between neutrality and half-hearted and/or opportunistic involvement. Each side resorted to small-scale raiding. At times there were also extended periods of truce. The only full- scale battle was an unsuccessful BaNgwaketse assault on the BaLete at Ramoutswa in 1881, which left over one hundred of the attackers dead.

Meanwhile to the north the neutral Khama III, free of potential BaKwena interference, was busy consolidating his newly gained position.[110] The fighting in the south also lessened Khama's dependence on Sechele's goodwill by further encouraging the diversion of traffic between south Africa and the interior hunting grounds to the secure route between his territory and the Transvaal. The BaKwena were also no longer able to send hunting parties into the lands north of the Botletle and the Zambezi, leaving the field to the BaNgwato and their northern neighbors.

For the participants, the Civil Wars exacted an enormous toll. In September 1876 Williams reported that Sechele "has suffered very heavy losses of cattle, the people are unable to

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110. Linchwe shrewdly encouraged goodwill along his northern flank by forwarded intelligence to Khama on the activities of Khamane who, while still at Molepolole, had been contacted by a large contingent of Boer "Thirstland" trekkers- BPP C.2220 Khama to L.M. du Plessis, March 11, 1877.

go hunting, the harvest was a failure, and worst of all, many lives have been sacrificed and most revolting murders have been practised."[111] The murders that the missionary was referring to were part of a emerging pattern of terrorism that was the conflict's saddest aspect.[112] Atrocities were committed on both sides usually by raiding parties falling upon isolated individuals and small groups. Raiding parties mutilated and killed women and children. Life soon became unsafe beyond the safety of their villages. In brutality the wars contrasted with other inter-*merafe* conflicts and cattle raids of the nineteenth century.[113] During a 1864 BaKwena raid on Shoshong, for example, the BaNgwato women did not abandon their homes, saying "BaKwena are not like MaTebele, they do not make war upon women and children."[114]

As the "Law of the Vultures" supplanted the "Law of Unity," people became manichean in their outlook. Among the children of Lowe's cave similar processes had in the past been articulated through the reduction of some groups to the status of "BaLala" or "BaKgalagadi."[115] A combination of warfare and ecological crisis has often served as a catalyst for such marginalization. An example of this is Moruakgomo and

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111. LMS C. Williams, Sept. 25, 1876.

112. Detailed accounts of atrocities in- BNA PP 1/1/10 Kayamore & Gokatweng; PP 1/1/1-2 Pilane, Phiri, & Segogoane. Holub, vol. 2 pp. 421-23. E. Price, pp. 459, 461-2, 464, 482-3. Also additional contemporary correspondence by resident L.M.S. and D.R.C. missionaries between 1875-82.

113. Livingstone, *Family Letters*, p. 64, once charged that "the murder of a child is in the eyes of a Motchuana a very brave deed." But this allegation came in the context of and incident in which he misindentifies the culprits as BagaKgafela when in fact they where AmaNdebele.

114. Smith *Great Lion of Bechuanaland*, p. 166.

115. The BaLete as well as BaKgatla bagaKgafela talk of the wars as having been fought against "BaKgalagadi," for Balete: V. Ellenburger "Di Robaroba," p. 48. Today one can still hear this sentiment in the SeKgatla lyrics such as "Molepolole ke motse yaga Mashaga."

Sebego's expropriation of cattle and karosses from western Kgalagadi communities in the aftermath of the BaKololo invasion. In the context of the Civil Wars local recognition of such a dialectical pattern is voiced in the following passage from Linchwe's self praise, in which he listens and responds to Sechele's purported charges against him:

> *"<'Sechele':> 'Your people Lentswe are contentious,*
> *your people, Lentswe, are stubborn.*
> *This is how I know they're contentious, undeniably contentious:*
> *they found people working for me;*
> *Matlapeng's, the children of the Kgosi, I was sending to fetch me bark*
> *Rapoo's people wove me baskets, Mosenyi's went to the Kalahari for me, Semele carved me wooden spoons; and I cut up eland breasts for them <ie. shared their sehuba.>*
> *Ever since they <Linchwe's> came, the people reject me;*
> *they say, "We cannot work for a Kgalagadi, a completely abandoned outsider, who eats unripe wild tubers."'*
> *The Separator's son <Linchwe:>, I looted cattle like you, I imitated your looting other people's."*[116]

As the Civil Wars became stalemated, the BaKgatla and their associates had the advantage of removing cattle under their control to the relative safety of the Transvaal. At first Sechele had reason to hope for SAR support.[117] Unfortunately for the BaKwena the parallel outbreak of warfare between the Boers and the BaPedi of Sekhukhuni, in 1876, and the subsequent annexation of the Transvaal by the British, in 1877, initially created near anarchy along the opposite side of the border. While Sechele tried to negotiate with the short lived British administration in Pretoria, his herders had to limit their beasts to the dry pastures west of the Kweneng-

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116. Schapera *Praise-Poems*, pp. 86-87.

117. State Archives, Pretoria TA SS. R. 1463/76, vol. 210, Williams/Sechele to Burgers, June 5, 1876. BPP C. 2220 Dispatch from Bailie, Oct. 2, 1976 w/ S.J. Meintjes to Sechele Sept. 1, 1876.

Kgalagadi. By the end of the century their cattleposts stretched westward past Kang and Tsetseng and north-west into the, at the time more hospitable, grasslands of the central Kgalagadi past Tshukudu's kraal and Kaotwe pan.[118]

Cattle clientage in the Kweneng-Kgalagadi sandveld increased.[119] Although the BaKwatleng, BaBolaongwe, and BaShaga living to the west of Letlakeng had been subordinated to the BaKwena through the *sehuba* tribute prior to the war, they had not suffered under the same degree of servitude, *bolata*, that had long beset their eastern kin. This transformation in their status was accompanied by a cycle of resistance and repression, which pitted the subject communities against their BaNgwaketse as well as BaKwena overlords.[120] In the distant Matsheng inhabitants united under Kgoshi Moapare, the

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118. Kweneng West- A.J. Wooky "Koa Kalahari" in *Mahoko a Becoana* Sept. & Oct. issues of 1889. BNA H.C. 14/2 Goold Adams Report of his journey from Molepolole to Lehututu, April 15, 1887. Also various correspondence concerning the western boundery of Kweneng & GaNgwaketse (1895-1905) PRO C.O. 879/44/490; and 47/517. Central Kgalagadi- BNA DCMol 5/18 RM to RC, May 12, 1928, which notes that Sechele gave the "Makgalagadi" at Kikau to his son Kgari while those at Kutse and Tshukudu remained royal property. SOC, Sebele to A.C. June 23, 30, & July 20, 1905, also to S. Minchin July 20, 1905. S. 6/1/1, Moses Malata, April 22, 1929.

119. Okihiro, "Hunters, Herders etc.", pp. 163-173, discusses the late nineteenth century shift to increased herding in the area but attributes this transformation to Sebele's alleged abolition of the *"botlhanka"*, which he mistakenly dates from c.1885. Sebele did try to alter the *bolata* system in his favour after his accession in 1892 (see chapter 3).

120. Incidents involving BaNgwaketse forcibly preventing parties of BaTlhware from escaping to the Matsheng in: "Mahoko a Lehatshe ya Bokwene" *Mahoko a Becwana* (Dec. 1885.)

MoRolong leader of Lehututu to preserve their autonomy.[121] Elsewhere the Crocodiles imposed harsh measures in order to secure their authority. A punitive expedition under Sebele executed Kgoshi Bokheme, the BaShaga leader at Kang. Other victims included BaBoloangwe diKgoshi Marapalale, Modimo, and Seeiso.[122] Despite this growth of more coercive forms of patron-client relationships, some of the Kweneng-Kgalagadi residents continued to occupy an intermediary position based, in part, on their own exploitation of enslaved Khoisan speaking labor.[123] By the early twentieth century the social division between the BaKwena on one hand, and the BaKgalagadi and "BaSarwa" on the other was reinforced by taboos against inter-marriage, although female *malata* were targets of sexual exploitation by their masters.[124] Instances of servants being bought and sold or exchanged are also known to have occured.[125]

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121. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kgoshi Motshoge and BNA PP 1/2/8 Motshoge, RraDire & Maepwe, Tiroesele Mosele, and Cuzen. H.C. 14/12 Goold-Adams, April 15, 1887. S. 3/1 1925 M.S. of Moses Malata. A.J. Wooky "Koa Khalahari," also "Journey to the Kgalagadi," *The Chronicle of the L.M.S.*, August 1888, pp. 362-68-p. 366. A.W. Hodson *Trekking the Great Thirst*, (T. Fisher Unwin, London 1912) pp. 32-33, 41-43. Adam Kuper "The Kgalagadi in the Nineteenth Century," *Botswana Notes and Records*, vol. 2 (1970), pp. 45-51.

122. Interview with Eyes Reokwanang, May 6, 1987 (M.P. for Kweneng-West 1965-84.) B.E.M. Moeng "The Root Cause of Poverty among the BaKgalagadi in Kweneng West" (Univ. of Botswana Fourth Year History Essay, 1986), p. 6.

123. Schapera "Ethnographical Texts in the Boloongwe Dialect of SeKgalagadi," *Bantu Studies*, vol. 12, no. 3 (1938), pp. 157-87. Wooky "Koa Khalahari," part 2, *Mahoko a Becona*, (Oct. 1889); and "The Kalagadi," and "Journey to Kgalagadi," in *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society*, (Jan. & Aug. 1888.) BNA D.C.Mol. 5/8 "Mosarwa Charlie." MacKenzie *Day-Dawn*, pp. 57-69.

124. Maulte, pp. 24-25.

125. BNA DCMol "Mosarwa Charlie"

The re-stratification of social relations in Kweneng's periphery affected the power structure within Molepolole, itself, by favoring those senior Sons of Kgabo who, along with the Kgosi, controlled the sandveld's resources. For this elite what may have been a revival of cattle keeping in the Kgalagadi partially compensated for decline in the value of the game products they received in tribute from the region, through the development of ostrich farming as well as overhunting.[126] The relative nature of this advantage should be emphasized, given that the loss of superior grazing in the eastern Kweneng was a major blow to the prosperity of the entire community.[127]

The Civil Wars also impacted upon the interests of the then emerging business community of Kimberley who, along with their cosmopolitan creditors, initially perceived the disturbances in various parts of "Bechuanaland," as well as in the Transvaal and Griqualand West itself, as an impediment to their efforts to "rationalize" the recruitment and retention of

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126. Exton, pp. 187-88. G. Nicholson *Fifty Years in South Africa*, (W.W. Greener, London 1898) p. 111. Parker Gilmore "The Territories Adjacent to the Kalahari Desert" *Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute* vol. 1, no. 14 (1882-3), p. 127. F. Selous *African Notes and Reminiscences* (MacMillan, London 1908) p. 208 (on overhunting.) 1879-88 statistics on ostrich farm production *The General Directory of South Africa 1890-91* (Dennis Edwards & Co. Cape Town, 1891) p. 546. *The Guide to South Africa, for the use of Tourists, Sportsmen, Invalids, and Settlers*, 1906-7 edition, p. 175.

127. BNA PP 1/3/2 Melville & Ferreriera Report of April 9, 1880. HC 192/2 J.S. Moffat report on Matebele and Northern Bechuana, July 24, 1885. E. Price, pp. 356-57, 503-05. BPP. C. 2220 Bailie's dispatch of Nov. 6, 1876. LMS Charles Willams, Sept. 25, 1876; and R. Price, Dec. 14,1881.

African labor.[128] In 1876 the desire "to secure a constant supply of cheap labor to satisfy the large wants of the Diamond Field labour market" led the Griqualand West administration to appoint a commission to investigate.[129] As a result Alexander Bailie was sent in a "northerly direction" to "ascertain where depots could be conveniently established along the line of route taken by the natives coming to these fields, as also to secure the co-operation of native Chiefs in an attempt to obtain free labour." This idea of setting up labor depots among the BaTswana had earlier been put forward by Coates Palgrave, another British official, in his 1874 "Report of a Journey to the countries of the Baralong and Bakwain."[130] Bailie's more ambitious 1876-77 tour took him to the political centers along the "Great Interior Road" from Kimberly to the Zambezi, that is to the courts of the BaTlhaping, Barolong, BaNgwaketse, BaKwena, BaKgatla bagaKgafela, BaNgwato, BaSeleka, and AmaNdebele. On his return journey he estimated that "a supply of at least 5,000 labourers annually" could be obtained from "the Amandebele, Bakwena, Bawangato, and Silica's tribes."[131] During the 1870s, BaKwena did journey to the Diamond fields earning wages which they were able to reinvest in guns, wagons, plows, and consumption goods.[132]

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128. Between 1876-78 land alienation in Griqualand West led resistence by local BaTlhaping which culminated in Luka's rebellion- Kevin Shillington *The Colonisation of the Southern Tswana 1870-1900* (Raven Press, Braamfontien 1985) pp. 61-83. This episode was a clear demonstration to the BaKwena and other BaTswana communities that a British administration could be as abominable as any Boer one.

129. BPP C. 2220 J.D. Barry to Sir Bartle Frere, May 19, 1877. Also included in the the enclosure is the "Report of the Commission upon the Griqualand Labour Question", published May 23, 1876.

130. PRO C.O. 879/7/74 Report w/ enclosures in Palgrave to R. Southby (Lt.Gov. of Griqualand West) Nov. 7, 1874.

131. BPP C. 2220, dispatch of March 12, 1877. He further recommended the establishment of depots within Botswana at Molepolole, Shoshong and Tati.

Bailie's mission set a precedent for the establishment of the Bechuanaland Protectorate. Beyond its immediate concern with labor recruitment, the expedition was part of a wider effort to establish a South African Federation under the Union Jack. The discovery of gold, in the Transvaal and Tati, as well as the diamonds at Kimberly had fueled this vision.[133] Sechele had, himself, long anticipated the political potential of mineral discoveries. In 1866, during a period of renewed tension with the Boers, he had placed before the Kgotla a proposal that a covert mission be sent into the Transvaal to obtain gold samples, which he was certain could be found in the alienated lands of the BaTlokwa. His plan was to then advertise the ore to the British who, he assumed, would then be motivated to seize the country from the Boers.[134] This intrigue appears to have been put on hold by the Kgotla due to misgivings about its details.

Bailie's arrival provided Sechele with an opportunity to forge a pact between the British and BaKwena. He quickly convinced Bailie that in order to assure their labor supply the British should cooperate with him in in resolving the Wars. An "Articles of Agreement" was drawn up and signed by the Kgosi in which he confirmed his ownership of the territory then occupied by the Bagakgafela.[135] Linchwe refused to sign this "treaty" and chose to avoid Bailie who, nonetheless, chose to interprete the MoKgatla's actions as

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132. The growth of migrant-labor is discussed more fully in chapter four, part one.

133. The modest exploitation of alluvial gold in a number of localities in the Tranvaal preceded the mid-1880's development of deep shaft mining along the Witswaterand. This earlier mining was the subject of German as well as British attention- British Colonial Office translations of select German publications in PRO CO 878/10/107, 109, 113.

134. E. Price, pp. 200-04.

135. BBP C.2220, "Articles of Agreement" signed by Sechele w/Sebele, Tumagole, Michael, Kgari and Fred Lewis (trader) on Oct. 9, 1876.

constituting de facto compliance. Thereafter, between 1878-80, Her Majesty's agents made a series of attempts to end the hostilities.[136] During this period the the BaKwena enjoyed the diplomatic advantage of British respect for their border with the, now eclipsed, SAR, which was finally demarcated in 1880.[137] An ultimatum was issued to the Mochudi residents that they must confine themselves and their livestock to one side of the border. But BagaKgafela plans to evacuate the Kweneng ended a few months later with the sudden withdraw of British authority in the Transvaal.

Gladstone's imperial retreat in 1881 ended the immediate prospect of a "British dominion or protectorate, in some form or other, over all the tribes between the Orange River and Lake N'gami, and between the sea and the present Transvaal frontier."[138] Bailie and his immediate superiors had pursued this vision by claiming that Sechele and Khama III's overtures for British support, against a influx of "Thirstland Trekkers," were an open invitation for imperial overule. The MoNgwato's actual text, and the MoKwena's lack of one, call this interpretation into question.[139] These alleged appeals for protection, nonetheless, provided a convenient pretext for future British action.

Fears about the Boers and British in the aftermath of the Pretoria Convention and sheer exhaustion and revulsion

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136. State Archives, Pretoria: TA SS R. 1754/78, 3076/78, 789/79, 3204/80, 3369/80, 3773/80, 3870/80, 4525/80 and W. 207/79 & 287/80. BNA PP 1/3/2 & R.C. 8/7 (Melville report and agreement). BPP C.2220.

137. BNA PP 1/3/2; and RC 8/7.

138. BPP C.O. 2220 Sir Bartle Frere, Gov. Cape Colony, to Sir Michael Beach MP, May 13, 1878.

139. Khama's text, as translated by J.D. Hepburn, in BPP C. 2220, includes such qualifiers as "I wish to hear how the Queen will receive me, and my country, and my people. What sort of protection it will be."

brought the Civil Wars to a close in 1882. An upsurge in fighting in 1881 had failed to give either side an advantage.[140] The BagaKgafela remained in their Mochudi stronghold, on the other hand the BaKwena succeeded in maintaining access to sections of the Ngotwane river and surrounding territory through new border settlements at such places as Kope, Lentswe-le-Tau and Mmamodia.[141] Military cooperation between Sebele and Bathoen I had, furthermore, secured the southern frontier of Kweneng, prior to the BaNgwaketse debacle at Ramoutswa.[142]

According to Kayamore and Gokatweng, peace was finally established between Linchwe and Sechele as a result of unilateral action on the part of the latter's son, Sebogiso.[143] Returning from the Transvaal, Sebogiso decided to avoid the safe, but parched, route to the north of Mochudi and instead went via the village itself, where he made a surprise appearence before the Kgotla. Linchwe asked him "did he not

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140. Detailed contemporary account of fighting in LMS, R. Price Annual Report, Dec. 14, 1881, which notes that "Sechele has forbidden his people to use the plough this year as a punishment for their cowardice in connection with a recent attack made by Lenchwe and his people upon some cattle posts close by here, so close that the firing could be heard from my house. At Kanye and Pilane's <Mosopa> there is also no ploughing and at other places the same. The people are keeping themselves free to fight."

141. Interview w/ S.G. Masimega, Sept. 10, 1985. Also BNA HC-Aug. 28, 1884 letter from the British Resident Pretoria enclosing July 14, 18, 1884 protests of the State Secretary of the SAR with regards to the movement of Secheli's people into the Transvaal.

142. Although neither the BaKwena nor BagaKgafela took part in the engagement the Battle of Ramoutswa may have been decisive in their mutual struggle in that it ended the long anticipated threat of a joint BaKwena-BaNgwaketse assault on Mochudi.

143. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kayamore & Gokatweng. Knoble "A History of Sechele," p. 61, says Sechele sent Ntseanyane to Mochudi with a spear to be handed to Kgamanyane (sic) as a sign of peace.

know he could have been killed?" to which the son of Sechele replied "Yes, but rather by this than the sun." The Kgosi told his council that this was a sign that the war must cease. After three days Sebogiso left for Molepolole carrying word that he was to be followed by a BaKgatla delegation, which would come to mourn the BaKwena dead. Sechele received the emissaries peacefully.

The truce left unresolved the *causus belli* of BaKwena sovereignty over BaKgatla occupied territory, a question that would be debated for another two decades. The peace, nonetheless, proved to be lasting, as many began to realize that all BaTswana would have to hang together or separately.

The restoration of Transvaal's independence in 1881 revived Boer bellicosity. South of the Molopo river filibusters, supported by Kruger's government in Pretoria, began to overrun the lands of the BaRolong and BaTlhaping. By 1883 the BaKwena and their neighbors had become involved in the conflict. In January Montshiwa visited Molepolole in order to interest Sechele in a new defensive union of the BaRolong, BaNgwaketse and BaKwena, a concordat that later included the BaKgatla bagaKgafela.[144] The alliance restored the ability of the BaRolong, with direct BaNgwaketse assistance, to defend themselves. By the end of the year the filibuster's Goshen Republic was confined to the Transvaal border farm of Rooigrond. Success against the Goshenites raised hopes of a strong, permanent western BaTswana confederacy allied to Britain. But by then the fate of the BaKwena and their allies was already being shaped in diplomatic cables between London

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144. BPP C. 3841, R. Price, May 30, and Montshiwa, June 2, 1883 to British Resident Pretoria. Molema *Montshiwa*, 129. Shillington, 136. J.A.I. Agar-Hamilton *The Road to the North*, (Longmans, London 1937)(excellent, albeit dated, general history of the period.)

and Berlin. The era of BaKwena pre-colonial independence was nearing its end.

Before 1885 the Kingdom waxed and then waned as a loose confederacy. Political power within the state was centered around the figure of Sechele, but even within his own village his authority was limited by the kgotla system and the existence of autonomous diKgosana. Beyond the capital Sechele claimed the right to regulate access to the land and resources of Kweneng as overlord of various tributary, BaKgalagadi, and allied, *meratswane* communities. During the Civil Wars the authority of BaKwena monarch and the Sons of Kgabo was further consolitated over a number of these communities, but others, including the two largest *meratswana*, the BaKgatla bagaKgafela and BaLete, were able to establish independent control significant territories at the expense of the BaKwena. A combination of political and commercial factors also ended Sechele's ability to lucratively manipulate events within Gammangwato, which by 1885 had begun to overshadow Kweneng as the leading regional power.

Chapter three

KWENENG UNDER COLONIAL RULE, 1885-95

This chapter explores BaKwena efforts to preserve the greatest possible degree of sovereignty for themselves during the first decade of the Bechuanaland Protectorate. In this struggle they cooperated with the other major *merafe* of southern Botswana and, after an initial period of hostility, the BaNgwato. They also enjoyed the indirect support of a significant faction of imperialist thinking who envisioned the Protectorate as a sphere within which Britain could afford to exercise limited jurisdiction. But from the beginning the ideal of establishing a true partnership between the Empire and its "protected" polities was compromised by the aggressive designs of a variety of interest groups, the most notable of whom were associated with Cecil Rhodes. Even before his British South Africa Company (BSAC) had received its Charter, the Rhodes-ian threat had begun to manifest itself through a pattern of provocations directed against the BaKwena by the BaNgwato as well as Protectorate administrations, both of whom acted as catspaws of the Chartered Company. That the polity did survive, albeit in a diminished state, is due in part due to the diplomacy of BaKwena working in concert with other BaTswana.

The chapter begins by examining the response of the BaKwena to Britain's unilateral declaration of the Protectorate over them, in 1885. This development, which was motivated by London's fear of German expansion in the region, was accepted but not welcomed by the Molepolole Kgotla. Initially the *morafe* was little troubled by its new over-rulers, but, from 1888, the Rhodes-ian threat began to manifest itself through a suddenly intrusive colonial presence. The second and third parts of the chapter trace the increasingly desperate efforts by the BaKwena and their neighbors to defend themselves

against the Company's designs. This non-violent struggle culminated in the 1895 mission of Sebele I, along with Batheon I and Khama III, to London to plead for the retention of Imperial rule. The success of the diKgosi's mission was assured after their return by the failure of the infamous Jameson Raid, which effectively ended the era of BSAC pre-eminence within the Protectorate.

Part 1: The Rabbit and the Lion

> "Moreover,the inhabitants of this little known portion of the earth- who are all members of the great Bechuana race, and are sub-divided into the following tribes, Batlhapins, Barolongs, Bangwaketse, Bakwena, Bamangwatos, each governed by an independent chief- are remarkable for their attachment to and respect for the British people, if we except Sechele, whose protestations of affection I have no faith in, and thoroughly believe that he would join Boer or Englishman with perfect indifference to ward off a momentary or temporary difficulty. To say the least harm about him is to designate him an old fox, and I much fear the son and heir-apparent is worse than the parent."- Parker Gillmore before the Royal Colonial Institute, 1882.[1]

> "Sechele is thoroughly English in all his sympathies. But his son is fearful that in trusting to English protection he will be reduced to the condition of the Native Chiefs in the Transvaal. He is highly intelligent, and is shrewd enough to distrust protection when he cannot see a single Chief in South Africa who has benefitted by it. Englishmen will admire his determined defence of his own rights. That he would like our protection, in the honest acceptation of the term, there can be no doubt."- *Diamond Fields Times*, 1885.[2]

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1. P. Gillmore "The Territories Adjacent to the Kalahari Desert," p. 126.
2. "Sir Charles Warren at Sechele's" *Diamond Fields Times* May 12, 1885 reprinted in PRO CO 879/24/317 w/cover letter by Robison to Derby, May 20, 1885.

A decade before the establishment of British rule over the western BaTswana, an anonymous MoTswana expressed the fear that: "We are between two lions, and the only question remaining undecided is as to which will eat us up."[3] By 1885 the BaKwena had coexisted with the Boers and British for over a half century. They had had the opportunity of observing how blacks living to their east and south had succumbed before both white communities and, therefore, had few illusions as to whether the bite of one could be less dangerous than that of the other. Like the tricky rabbit who always survives against the odds in the allegorical menagerie of SeTswana folklore they also knew that the best way to escape from a lion's attention is to redirect its hunger.[4] During the early years of the Protectorate they thus made common cause with others seeking to obstruct, divert and/or coopt through cooperation the *Makgoa's* unwelcome appetite. In practicing this strategy they believed that the greatest danger to their survival continued to be the immediate greed of local whites rather than the distant authority of Her Majesty's men in London.

Throughout the mid-nineteenth century there had been periodic calls, by imperialists representing and/or purporting to represent a variety of motives, for the creation of some form of British rule over the vast zone then labeled on the maps as Bechuanaland. London's decision to establish a Protectorate over the southern half of modern Botswana in the January of 1885 was part of a wider reaction to Berlin's sudden push for a major political presence in the sub-continent. In 1884 the Kaiserreich caught Her Majesties Service off guard by suddenly seeking to annex both the Namib

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3. John Brown "The Bechuana Tribes" *Cape Monthly Magazine* vol. 2 (July 1875), pp. 1-5, p. 3.

4. Sebele I, who was looked upon by many non-BaTswana as well as locals as a leading authority on SeTswana language and folktales, was reported to be particularly fond of the *mmutla*, rabbit, tales- Lloyd, p. 219.

Coast and the harbor of St. Lucia, in then quasi-independent Zululand.[5] The British knew that German citizens had been active within the region for over thirty years. Thus the Foreign Office faced the very real prospect that the Cape could suddenly find itself cut off from the interior of central Africa by a solid band of German and Boer territory. In response London's Berlin ambassador was, in March of 1885, told to inform his hosts that "Bechuanaland and Kalahari," as defined by an Order in Council dated the 27th of January ultimo, were now under British protection.[6] On the 14th of the same month Sir Hercules Robinson, the Imperial High Commissioner at the Cape, was informed of the developments and instructed to have Warren communicate with Khama and Sechele.[7]

General Sir Charles Warren or "Rragalase" was already a familiar figure among the western BaTswana.[8] Since the previous November he had been empowered to enforce British interests in the BaRolong and BaTlhaping countries south of the Molopo. Earlier, in 1877-78, as Special Commissioner in Griqualand West, he had been responsible for a process of widespread land alienation and the brutal suppression of the

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5. The Namib coast holdings quickly expanded to form the German territory of South-West Africa (Namibia), but the British German designs on St. Lucia Bay.

6. PRO CO 879/22/292, (also in BPP C.4432)- Derby to Robinson, March 14, 1885; also Colonial Office to Foreign Office, March 17, 1885 and Foreign Office to Colonial Office, March 20, 1885. The Order in Council, in BPP C.4432, defined the territory as: "the parts of South Africa situated west of the....South African Republic...; north of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope; east of the 20th meridian of east longitude and south of the 22nd parallel of south latitude; and not within the jurisdiction of any civilized power."

7. PRO CO 879/22/292, Derby to Robinson, March 14, 1885. Six days later Robinson was authorized to publicly announce the new Protectorate in a gazette extraordinary, published on March 23, 1885.

8. Rragalase or Sir Eyeglass: he wore a monocle.

resulting BaTlhaping uprising. For his latest mission he had at his disposal some four thousand troops. The formation and size of this "Warren Expedition" was due to the continued fighting between BaTswana and Boer usurpers south of the Molopo, which had by then frustrated less committed attempts to establish British hegemony. Warren, in the early months of 1885, was able to fulfill his initial instructions without having fired a shot. The Boer "republics" of Goshen and Stellaland were dissolved but their land claims were, for the most part, ultimately upheld.[9]

Warren set out on his tour north of the Molopo accompanied by a party of no more than seventy, including twenty troopers. Among his fellow travelers was John MacKenzie the former L.M.S. missionary to the BaNgwato and a leading "humanitarian imperialist." By this time the Reverend had already converted the General to his vision of direct imperial rule over BaTswana territories from Kimberley to the Zambezi.[10]

On the Monday morning of April 27, 1885, Warren formally notified the Kgotla that the Queen had unilaterally declared "a Protectorate over Bechuanaland and the Kalahari, west of the South African Republic, north of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, westward to Namaqualand, and northwards to the

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9. BPP C.4889 Robinson to Granville, Dec. 7, 1886 enclosing "Report of the Land Commission." Also Shillington *The Colonization of the Southern Tswana*, chapter seven.

10. In 1884 MacKenzie had briefly served as the first Deputy Commissioner of southern Bechuanaland, south of the Molopo, before Robinson had him replaced by his arch-rival Rhodes.

boundaries of the Matebele country."[11] The news was familiar to the ears of many in his audience of "several hundred of the Bakwena tribe" for they had already read about it in various press reports.[12] Particularly upsetting to some had been an article in the L.M.S. paper *Mahoko a Becuana* in which it was stated that Queen had taken her action at the expressed wishes of Khama, Gaseitsiwe, and Sechele. During the meeting the BaKwena royals greeted the General's notice with responses ranging from reserve to mistrust to open hostility. Sebele set the tone for the discussion by demanding "What in us has brought this on, that the country should be taken away from us." This initiated a contentious dialogue between the prince and the General, which did little to allay the former's suspicions:

> Sebele- "When a man takes a shield and holds it up, he holds it up against something; what is it that we are protected against?"
> Warren- "Is there nothing you want protection against?"
> Sebele- "You may see it but we the Bakwena do not see it yet."
> Warren- "Does Sebeli not know what has just taken place down to the south at Montsioa's?"
> Sebele- "We, the Bakwena, are not Baralongs."
> Warren- "What does Sebeli mean?"
> Sebele- "A stem-buck cannot protect itself, but God protects it and lets it live.
> Warren- "Was it the same with you when you came here as refugees fleeing from the Boers?"

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11. Two slightly different sets of English minutes of the meeting exist: the official transcript in BPP C.4588 and a unofficial text published within a long article "Sir Charles Warren at Sechele's" *Diamond Fields Times*. The former notably excludes "and northwards to the boundaries of the Matebele country."

12. Number at meeting as well as following excerpts, unless otherwise noted, from the official account in B.P.P. C.4588. The *Diamond Fields Times* put the number of BaKwena present at 300 and further noted that a photographer was employed during the discussion. For the power of the press among the BaKwena, in a different context see- LMS Wookey, May 17, 1886.

> Sebele- "A stem-buck gets into difficulties, but when it does it must get out of them, and God helps it to do so."
> Warren- "Then does Sebeli wish me to tell the Queen that the Bakwena are strong enough to protect themselves?"
> Sebele- "We do not want any protection, we are strong enough to protect ourselves."[13]

Sebele was followed by Kgosidintsi who gave a long lecture on the history of Anglo-Bakwena relations since Livingstone's residency. He concluded by asserting: "I feel assured that I am an Englishman." Kgari, Sebele's sibling rival, was a bit more cautious declaring: "Kosi Lentswe (ie. Kgosidintsi) has put things in a new light to me. We have all along been going towards protection, but if there is to be a paying of taxes, then it is another thing." Sechele, for his part, remained acute but non-committal:

> "I do not understand the exact object of your coming here. When we see you appear here, we do not know if it is life or death to us, but that we know that it will be death to us if you do to us as the Boers do to the Baharutze. We shall be dead men if you do to us as the Boers did to the Bakatla at Rustenburg. If you talk merely in parables we shall not understand you easily. I have seen a newspaper in which it was said I asked for protection, also Ghasitsive and Khama. I do not understand this asking..."

Sechele was not being absolutely straightforward. For several months he had been aware that some form of British protection was inevitable. In a letter by his missionary, Rodger Price, to the Premier of the Cape Colony, Thomas Upington, in December 1884, the Kgosi was said to be willing "to enter into communication with you or any other duly appointed person, with a view to himself and his country coming under the protection of the Queen of England."[14] The

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13. BPP C.4588 minutes.
14. CPP G.37-1885, Ministers to Gov./HC, March 7, 1885. enclosing Rodger Price to Thomas Upington, Dec. 15. 1884.

General had a copy of the letter. He was probably also aware of the discussions, which had taken place two days earlier, between Sechele's old friend Sam Edwards, then serving as a Major with Warren, and the BaKwena royals. During the meeting Sechele is reported to have given the impression of his qualified acceptance of, and Sebele his qualified opposition to, the Protectorate.[15]

Sechele and Sebele expressed the same qualifications to both Warren and Edwards. Cognizant of the fates which had befallen BaTswana living under British as well as Boer settler governments, and notwithstanding Sechele's reported willingness to negotiate with Upington, they were absolutely opposed to any union with the Cape Colony. They also did not wish to see taxes introduced. Speaking on behalf of the consensus of the Kgotla, Sechele, furthermore, wished to defer any acceptance of the Protectorate until they had had a chance to observe how it benefitted the already "protected" *merafe* to their south. Said the Kgosi to the General: "Today I do say we are glad on account of what you have told us, but it is an expression made in the dark and in uncertainty, as at childbirth when one cannot tell whether a girl or boy is to be born."[16]

Warren left for Khama's capital having received equivocal

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15. "Sir Charles Warren at Sechele's" *Diamond Fields Times.* Sam Edwards or "Sanwe" ("Our Sam") was the same individual who had accompanied Sechele to Cape Town in 1853. Of the Saturday meeting the correspondent noted that Sechele "was gorgeously attired in a blue velvet robe, edged in white, with the arms of England resplendent on his back." Sanwe brought with him a private communication from MacKenzie.

16. A document expressing this consensus was also drawn up and signed by Kgari, Kgosidintsi, and Sebele in addition to Sechele- BPP C.4588 "C" "Proposals of the Chief Sechele," April 28, 1885 (certified by Sam Edwards.)

receptions at both Sechele's and Gaseitsiwe's.[17] According to one reporter it was clear "that England's prestige had received another rude shock."[18] Although Britain had the power, if necessary, to impose its will, its need to notify the diKgosi was more than good manners. In the aftermath of the Berlin Conference local treaties and effective occupation were the criteria for powers to have their African claims internationally recognized. The urgency of the General's task in this regard was underscored by intelligence of a three-man German team who were seeking land grants from the BaTawana and BaNgwato.[19]

At Shoshong Warren's message was enthusiasticly welcomed. Khama's positive response to "the desire of the Queen" reflected his long-term faith that the interests of his *bogosi* were congruent with some of the "the gentlemen of the Government of England." Now in the day-dawn of British overule he moved quickly to establish his image as the model of a "Native" ruler eager to collaborate with the Empire.[20] His simulacrum was already being celebrated in the patronizing

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17. The record of Warren's April 25, 1885 meeting with Gaseitsiwe, Bathoen "and several councillors" curiously contains no reference to the Protectorate, the *Diamond Fields Times* report states that both Gaseitsiwe and Sechele "no longer believe in England's power to protect the black man."

18. "Sir Charles Warren at Sechele's" *Diamond Fields Times*. MacKenzie *Austral Africa*, vol. 1 p. 240, notes that the Boer Press at the time was full of stories of Warren being rebuffed. A blow by blow account of the Molepolole meeting was subsequently featured in W.J. Leydes' *Het Insluiten van de Boeren-Republieken*, (Two volumes, Albert de Lange, Amsterdam, 1914) vol. 2, pp. 271-75.

19. BPP C.4839, Goold-Adams Report of Dec. 8, 1885, enclosed in Robinson to Stanley, Dec. 30, 1885. Intelligence of alleged German ambitions in the area also referred to in PRO CO 879/23/305 Upington to Robinson, Dec. 30, 1885, enclosed in Robison to Stanley, Jan. 20, 1886.

20. Over the years Khama has of come to represent a spectrum of images, see Parsons "The 'Image' of Khama the Great" for more subtle analysis.

prose of missionaries and other agents of liberal imperialism whose works ultimately assured that the sun never set upon subjects who had been apprized of his good name. From Manchester to Melanesia and throughout British Africa they would raise and reduce "Khama the Good" into a late Victorian caricature of the enlightened blackman serving as a understudy of white, Christian civilization. Khama's collaboration was, in fact, a product of his view of the Queen's government as a distant yet powerful force that, if properly appeased, could be manipulated against various more immediate challenges. Although his close relationship with the occupying power during the early years of colonialism often put him at odds with the more wary stances adopted by his southern peers all of the diKgosi shared his preference for the "Imperial Factor" over other potential forms of white rule. The diKgosi were also equally unanimous in their appreciation of the futility of armed "primary" resistance.

On his return from Khama's Warren once more held discussions with the BaKwena, whose leadership had now reconciled themselves to a conditional acceptance of the Protectorate. Even as Sebele had earlier spoken of rejection the entire Kgotla would have been aware of the proverb that: "The stem-buck which sticks out its neck dies with spears meant for another."[21] The terms of this acceptance were set out in a second document drawn up on the 25th of May 1885 in which it was stated:

> "I, Sechele, son of Mochwasali, Chief of the Bakwena, having with me my sons and younger brothers, have heard the message concerning the protection of the Queen of England, and give thanks for it.

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21. *"Phuduhudu eemolala moleele ebolawa kemarumo eseayone."*

> Concerning the laws which shall be established in the country, I say I wish to rule among my people according to custom, but I give to the Queen to rule among white people wherever they are."[22]

By limiting the Queen to extra-territorial authority over "white people" the BaKwena had surrendered the minimum. Arguably the document left Kweneng with the same international legal status as such states as the Ottoman or Chinese Empires, which had also granted extra-territorial privilages to various imperial powers. Indeed in an important 1890 memorandum the High Commissioner's legal advisor was of the opinion that Sechele's proposals, together with those of Khama and Gaseitsiwe, "do not per se convey to the Crown any legal jurisdiction within the territory of these Chiefs."[23] Although such de jure considerations would ultimately be compromised by the Colonial Office's eventual resort to the Foreign Jurisdictions Act as a carte blanche for its actions, ambiguities over sovereignty and jurisdiction provided the BaKwena, and other BaTswana, with a basis with which to periodically challenge colonial initiatives.[24] In this respect Sechele's proposals, along with those of Gaseitsiwe, stood in contrast with those put forward earlier by Khama who had stated: "Further I give to the Queen to make laws and change

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22. BPP C.4588 no. 34 H, "Proposals of the Chief Sechele, 25th May 1885," (signed by Sechele, Sebele, Kgari, Kgosidintsi, Motswakhumo, and Mhiko) (translated by John MacKenzie.)

23. PRO 879/32/392 memorandum by W.P. Schriener, June 10, 1890, enclosed (and accepted) in Loch to Lord Knutsford, June 17, 1890. Schriener's opinion was based largely on the fact that no definite acceptance of the proposals had been made but further noted that if they were accepted the Crown would still be "subject always to the limitations indicated in the several proposals..."

24. This Act allowed for the assumption of legal authority where "a foreign country is not subject to any government from whom Her Majesty might obtain jurisdiction" ie. then socalled "uncivilized peoples" etc. Application of the Act was obviously inconsistent with Warren's solicitation of the diKgosi.

them in the country of the Bamangwato, with reference to both black and white."[25] This distinction did not pass unnoticed among members of the Colonial Office staff.[26]

Khama's particular eagerness to cement London's direct responsibility over all of his country, while at the same time avoiding the burden of imperial taxation, led him, under the influence of MacKenzie, to make his so-called "magnificent offer" to Warren. A hundred-thousand square miles of, for the most part disputed, lands were placed at the General's disposal for "the English settler who newly arrives should build his house and cultivate his lands, and show himself to be a true settler and worker, and not a travelling trader."[27] The BaKwena and BaNgwaketse followed the BaNgwato lead but made more ambiguous and modest land grants.[28] Sechele offered the disputed area between the Ngotwane and Madikwe, then occupied by the BagaKgafela, as well as remote portions of the

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25. BPP C.4588 "G", "Proposals by Chief Khame," May 13, 1885 (signed by Khama and 43 others) This document was secretly drafted for Khama by MacKenzie, re-copied by the then resident missionary Edwin Lloyd, and with regards to the limits of the Queen's jurisdiction closely follows earlier agreements made between MacKenzie and the BaRolong booRraTshidi and BaTlhaping- Dachs *MacKenzie Papers* p. 195, Mackenzie to Mrs. MacKenzie, May 12, 1885. Lloyd's comment, LMS Lloyd, June 1, 1885, that Khama in his reply had "not taken any irrevocable step" is naive. Gaseitsiwe's proposals of May 29, 1885, "I".

26. PRO CO 879/32/392 Colonial Office to Foreign Office, July 3, 1890.

27. BPP C.4588, "Proposals of the Chief Khame." Also PRO CO 879/22/295 Warren's telegraphed response to offer, sent from Molepolole on May 23, 1885, forwarded by Robinson to Derby, May 27, 1885. For MacKenzie's account see *Austral Africa* vol. 2, pp. 252-68.

28. BPP C.4588, "Proposals of Chief Sechele 25th May 1885;" Gaseitsiwe's proposals were clearly modeled after those of Sechele but are somewhat less concise and cautious in their wording. Also PRO CO 879/22/295 Warren telegraph of June 1, 1885, forwarded Robinson to Derby, June 3, 1885, informing his superiors of BaKwena and BaNgwaketse offers.

central Kgalagadi, with the understanding that in both of these areas they would still be able to hunt.[29] Besides attempting to establish his own territorial claims, Sechele may have further hoped to take with his left hand what his right hand offered for his proposals carried the significant proviso that: "Further I wish to establish that the country concerning which I am speaking is not saleable according to the Bakwena. I say let this go on to be the law of the country."[30] As it was not much attention was paid to the BaKwena and BaNgwaketse offers as news of of their nature and extent was not received in time to effect the Colonial debate over the matter. It was Khama's offer that had excited colonial imaginations and providing Warren with his keystone for lobbying on behalf MacKenzie's vision of a Crown Colony embracing all of Bechuanaland. A proposal for such a "Territorial Government" was hurriedly drawn up. According to this blueprint administrative costs would have been largely financed through the rent of some 7,000 farms, each covering 6,000 acres, to be carved out of the new "Crownlands."[31]

Fortunately for the BaTswana this prospectus, while welcomed by sections of the British and South African public, immediately ran into the strong opposition of the High Commissioner, as well as both the official and non-official

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29. The BaNgwato and BaNgwaketse also wished to maintain their hunting rights in the territories they gave the crown.

30. MacKenzie *Austral Africa* vol. 2, p. 240, notes that during the lengthy discussions to determine which land should be offered "Sechele was specially anxious that his title to a certain distant tract of country should be recognized" in preference to Khama's counterclaims. Warren and MacKenzie had themselves visited Linchwe on their journey to Shoshong and had no illusions about the implications of Sechele's offer of the BaKgatla country.

31. BPP C.4588, Report of Baden-Powell Commission, June 2, 1885. Each farm's rent would have been L 9.

Cape Colony elites.[32] Robinson instructed Sechele's former missionary, J.S. Moffat, to prepare a memorandum on the countries of the BaKwena, BaNgwato, and AmaNdebele which, when drafted, provided a suitable critique of the potential for colonization in the area.[33] An already skeptical Colonial Office found Moffat persuasive. On August 13, 1885 Warren's command was terminated and his plan rejected.[34] The defeat of Territorial Government averted the immediate possibility of massive land alienation. On the other hand by embracing the notion of a minimal "Imperial factor" within the Protectorate London had left the door open for the future expansion of the Cape "Colonial factor."

Following the recall of Warren, neither the BaKwena nor the British had any firm idea about the Protectorate's destiny. In this context both parties were willing to accept a status quo of benign neglect. For its part the Protectorate administration was guided by the proposition that: "The interest of this country in the territory north of the Molopo is very limited,"[35] Such assumptions tallied with the BaKwena's "utter distaste for the rule or control of the white man."[36] Even the local missionary, Howard Williams, was content. Williams wrote to his superiors that, although "no amount of reasoning will convince even the most intelligent of the Kwena it was not the white moruti who is responsible for white rule and penetration," his churches had never been more full! But suspicions persisted. In November of 1885 Sechele wrote to the Protectorate's first administrator, Deputy Commissioner Sidney

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32. Arguments summarized in PRO CO 879/23/301, Fairfield memo, "Bechuanaland Affairs," of July 15, 1885.

33. BNA H.C. 192/2, J.S. Moffat memo of June 24, 1885. Also PRO CO 879/24/317 Moffat to Bower, July 17, 1885.

34. BPP C.4588, Stanley to Robinson; and to Warren; August 13, 1885.

35. BPP C.4588 Stanly to Robinson, August 13, 1885.

36. LMS Howard William's 1889 Annual Report for Molepolole.

Shippard or "Morena Maaka" ("Lord Liar") as he came to be known to the BaTswana,[37] in order to express his concern over the annexation of British Bechuanaland (that is the BaRolong and BaTlhaping lands south of the Molopo.)[38] In his letter the Kgosi pointedly asked about his own status as ruler. Shippard replied: "Your position in your own country in relation to the British Government is that you are still chief over your own town and people as before." But this reassurance was qualified by the condition that Sechele must maintain the peace on colonial terms, which included procuring supplies for the Bechuanaland Border Police (BBP), by force if necessary.

The first major incident to involve the Protectorate administration in BaKwena affairs was the Lephepe dispute of 1886.[39] This conflict was precipitated by Khama, who prevented Sechele's people from watering their cattle at Lephepe, although the wells had been originally dug by BaKwena

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37. Ian Colvin *The Life of Jameson* (Edwin Arnold, London 1926) vol. 2, pp. 141-42: Shippard (urging the 1896 Uitlander rebels in Johannesburg to lay down their arms)- "Not a hair on your head will be touched." Trible (rebel leader)- "Do you know your Kafir name in Bechuanaland? they call you Marana-Maka, the Father of Lies."

38. BNA H.C. 36/49 which currently contains Robinson to Stanley cover letter of Jan. 27, 1886, Shippard-Sechele correspondence missing. Sillery *Founding a Protectorate* quotes from Sechele to Shippard, Nov. 20, 1885 and Shippard to Sechele Jan. 12, 1886 (citing PRO CO 417/10 no. 24, not seen.) In September of 1885 Bechuanaland was divided: the territory north of the Molopo remained as the Bechuanaland Protectorate and the south becoming the Colony of British Bechuanaland (which was incorporated into the Cape Colony in 1895.) From 1885 to 1895 Shippard served concurrently as the Administrator of British Bechuanaland and the Deputy Commissioner of the Protectorate.

39. The minutes of the "Lophepe Enquiry" are contained in BPP C.4956, earlier correspondence related to the dispute are contained in C.4890 which largely duplicates the BNA HC correspondence which I cite below. The Lephepe dispute is also discussed in Glorius Gumbo's study of the demarcation of reserve boundaries (op.cit.)

subjects.[40] The dispute is significant as an early indication of a willingness on the part of certain British officials to accomodate BaNgwato ambitions at the expense of other communities. Khama convinced Colonel Frederick Carrington, the commanding officer of the BBP, to expel Sechele's followers.[41] But the BaKwena soon returned to the area . At this point J.S. Moffat recommended that the conflicting claims warranted an enquiry.[42] Shippard chose to ignore Moffat's proposal and instead dispatched a BBP contigent under Lieutenant Hamilton Goold-Adams to once more drive out the BaKwena. Fortunately the Deputy Commissioner was on this occasion overruled by the High Commissioner. An enquiry was subsequently held, which resulted in the equal division of the wells.

The months which followed the resolution of the Lephepe dispute were uneventful. Colonial authority was unobstrusive, being confined to occasional patrols by the BBP. For his part Sechele attempted to court British support for his claims against the BagaKgafela, through such tactics as granting a prospecting concession in the area occupied by Linchwe's people.[43] Although the Colonial government made several half hearted efforts to mediate between the claims of its "tenant

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40. The contention that the wells were originally dug by BaKgalagadi subjects of Sechele's is supported by- BPP C.4956 "Lophepe Enquiry." BNA HC 7/32 Moffat to Shippard, July 22, 1886. Interviews with Baakile Lekapane and Jacobo Maitshoko, Jan. 18, 1986. Okihiro "Hunters, Herders, Cultivators and Traders," pp. 167-69. See also chapter 2 e.g. prior BaKwena residence at Lephepe.

41. BNA HC 6/28 Carrington to Shippard, May 26, 1886. Carrington's negative opinion of Sechele at time expressed in HC 8/3 Carrington to Shippard, July 29, 1886.

42. Initially Moffat was inclined to accept Khama's claims but he changed his mind after receiving a pro-BaKwena letter by Rodger Price, whose credibility was strengthened by the fact that he had previously served as a missionary among both the BaNgwato and BaKwena.- BNA HC 7/16 & HC 7/32.

43. BNA HC 17/42 Moffat to Shippard, Oct. 19, 1887; and HC 15/14 Shippard to Robinson, Aug. 12, 1887.

44. BNA HC 93/29, on various disputes; and HC 24/2.

chiefs" and "territorial chiefs" little progress was made.[44] Sechele was informed that, while the government respected his "sovereign rights" over the lands occupied by the BagaKgafela, outsiders wishing to conduct economic activities within Kgatleng must also obtain Linchwe's permission. Despite occasional threats of violence neither the various *merafe* south of Gammangwato nor the Protectorate administration desired to see the status quo altered through violence.[45] Thus the BagaKgafela, and BaLete, continued to enjoy their de facto independence, while BaKwena rule over the BaTlokwa and other *meratswane* was maintained.[46]

In the early months 1888 the era of imperial disinterest showed signs of its imminent demise. One harbinger was a government notice limiting the ability of the diKgosi to confer concessions.[47] Further evidence of an emerging authoritarianism was manifested in June 1888 when a party of BaNgwato tried to pass through Kweneng holding William Francis prisoner on charges of "trespass."[48] Khama's action, without reference to Sechele, was interpreted by the BaKwena

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45. Within Gammangwato the Protectorate government, by contrast, sanctioned Khama's conquest of the BaSeleke in 1887, sending a 25 man detachment of BBP to accompany the BaNgwato *mephato* as observers- details in BPP C.5237 also J. Cooper Chadwick *Three Years in Lobengula and Experiences in South Africa* (Books of Rhodesia, Bulawayo, 1975 reprint of 1893 original) pp. 43-44.

46. For BaTlokwa status- BNA HC 93/29 Interview between Sebele and Shippard, Feb. 25, 1888; and Goold-Adam's Report, March 5, 1888. Also BNA HC 19/47.

47. BNA HC 84/17 Government Notice of March 27, 1888.

48. PRO CO 879/29/358. LMS Wookey, Aug. 4, 1888. Chadwick, p. 36. Francis, along with his partner Chapman who escaped, had been on their way to Lobengula from whom the two had acquired prospecting rights in the "Disputed Territory" claimed by both the BaNgwato and AmaNdebele. Earlier the two had been expelled from Shoshong for selling alchohole.

Kgotla as a violation of their borders. Francis was released.[49] For this Sechele was subsequently admonished by Moffat.[50] In a possible lapse of judgement the magistrate went so far as to warn the Mokwena that: "I know also the you had communication with Edward Chapman after he ran away from Shoshong, so that you may yet be charged with conspiracy with him and with Francis against the Government."[51] The relationship between the BaKwena and the British was thus already beginning to show signs of strain when the arrival of Shippard inaugurated an era of of deepened mistrust.

Part 2: The Company

In August of 1888 Shippard visited Molepolole, Kanye, and Mochudi. At each stopover the Deputy Commissioner he informed the diKgosi that it was their destiny to be annexed in the manner of British Bechuanaland.[52] The Deputy Commissioner's remarks alarmed his superiors as well as his hosts. It may of course be only coincidental, but shortly after his departure the BaKwena decided that the time had come to initiate a new *mophato*. According to the missionary Wookey, who vigorously lobbied for government intervention to put a stop to this "vilest heathenism," this particular *bogwera* incorporated large

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49. PRO 879/29/358 Sechele & Sebele to Shippard, June 6, 1888. Francis for his part also wrote Shippard offering to turn himself in if necessary.

50. BNA HC 24/3 Moffat to Sechele, July 25, 1888 (also in PRO CO 879/30/369.)

51. As it was none of the parties was ever charged with anything stemming from the incident, whatever may have been the nature of their possible intrigues there was certainly no legal basis for the British to uphold the arrest of Francis and Chapman. The fact that the two had notified both Khama and the British of their endeavors makes their subsequent interception all the more dubious.

52. PRO CO 879/30/369, Shippard's reports of Aug. 3, from Kanye; Aug. 7, from Molepolole; Aug. 11, 1888 from Mochudi (also BNA HC 24/7.) Among the BaKwena Shippard spoke of annexation in an interview with Kgosidintsi.

numbers of "strangers from other towns" as well as "Makgalahari" and "Bushmen."[53] Based on Wookey's accounts and other circumstantial evidence it appears that Sebele, with Kgosidintsi's backing, championed the initiation as a show of strength for his leadership to his aging father and, possibly, uninitiated sibling rival Kgari. At about the same time the missionary also reported that a large meeting, probably a *letsholo*, was called in which Sebele gave the order that all men were now responsible for obtaining arms and ammunition so that "wild dogs and animals might be killed."[54]

By the time Shippard had received Wookey's letters, he had been reprimanded and instructed to retract his remarks on his return journey.[55] During Shippard's return visit, Sebele expressed his desire that the diKgosi of the *merafe* bordering on Kweneng come together at Sechele's in order to settle their outstanding differences.[56] This suggestion was enlarged by the other BaKwena present into a call for the convening of "a great meeting or 'Pitso' of the Bechuana chiefs at Molepolole." The Deputy Commissioner agreed to preside over such a gathering but its venue was shifted to Kopong.[57]

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53. BNA HC 24/24, Wookey to Shippard, Sept. 21, 1888. Also A.J. Wookey's "A Struggle at Molepolole" in *The Chronicle of the London Missionary Society* (August 1887), pp. 342-345.

54. BNA HC 23/32 Wookey to Shippard, Oct. 1, 1888. The meeting occurred in mid-September.

55. PRO 879/30/369 Robinson to Knutsford, Aug. 29, 1888, also Knutsford to Robinson, Oct. 4, 1888. See also BNA HC 42/44. Prior to his return Shippard sent word to Sechele through Wookey that their was no immediate plans for annexation which was unlikely unless disturbances broke out or their was a sudden influx of Europeans as a result of the granting of concessions- LMS Wookey, Oct. 30, 1888.

56. BNA PP 1/3/3 Deputy Commissioner to H.C., Dec. 6, 1888. Also BNA HC 25/15 telegraphic report, Deputy Commissioner to Acting Adim, Dec. 20, 1888. HC 24/41 Shippard to Moffat, Dec. 11, 1888. PRO CO 879/30/369, Robinson to Knutsford, Dec. 14 & 22, 1888. BPP C.5918. LMS Wookey, Dec. 6, 1888.

57. Shippard's explanation and Sechele's disappointment with this in PRO CO 879/30/372 Administrator to Governor Jan.

In his invitation to the diKgosi Shippard outlined a formal agenda that must have confirmed the worst fears of most of his invitees: hut tax, defence against invasion, medicine and hospitals, opening of permanent waters, the telegraph, the railway, and the amicable settlement of all disputes between chiefs. The first reaction by Sechele, and sons, upon receiving the invitation was to boycott the conference: "I was in agreement with your word, Chief, that anyone not wishing to be under the Government would be let alone to rule himself, and I, Sechele, have not yet any desire to be ruled by anybody."[58] According to Shippard (who had reason to exaggerate), the situation was becoming critical: "I am given to understand, by the Reverend Wookey and others, that there is great excitement in Molepolole with reference to the possible imposition of the hut tax; that a massacre of whites was threatened; that he himself was threatened with personal violence by Sebele, and that all the Christian Natives, and indeed all the better disposed among the people, headed by Kgosilintse, had left the station."[59] Alarmist reports were also received that the BaKwena and BaNgwaketse had jointly agreed to oust the BBP from their territories[60]

31, 1889. Kopong is in eastern Kweneng close to the, at the time undemarcated, boundary with the BagaKgafela.

58. Sechele's response in Sillery *Founding a Protectorate* p. 120 citing original in PRO 417/27 (not seen.) Sillery suggests that Sechele's response may have been the work of Sebele.

59. PRO CO 879/30/372, Administrator to Governor, Jan. 31, 1889 (reporting from Molepolole.) Also BNA PP 1/3/3 Stevenson to Carrington, Jan. 18, 1888, who notes that he also got his information from Wookey. An exodus from Molepolole during this period would not, in itself, have been unusual.

60. BNA HC. 25/17 Stevenson to Carrington, Jan. 12, 1889; and HC 25/42 statement by Oosthuizen to Bates, Feb. 12, 1889. Small detachments of BBP had been posted at Molepolole and Kanye in 1887. The BBP were resented by BaTswana in general as a undisciplined nuisance- LMS Wookey, Aug. 4, 1888. L. Sedimo "The Border Police and the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1885-95," (Univ. of Botswana Fourth Year History Essay, 1986.) Also correspondence related to charges made by Rev. Owen Wakin in British Bechuanaland in BPP C.4890 & C.4956.

It is clear that Shippard, in the closing months of 1888, misjudged the then existing relationship between Sebele and Kgosidintsi. In reporting on his December meeting with the BaKwena the Deputy Commissioner suggested that Kgosidintsi, along with Kgari and "the majority of Bechuanas south of Khama's vast dominions," would have welcomed annexation as a liberation from arbitrary rule.[61] While noting that Kgari's "manner towards me became almost servile," Shippard went on to deprecate Sebele's authority and disposition, suggesting that it was "Kgosidintsi who in all negotiations must be regarded as virtually Chief of the BaKwena." As it was Kgosidintsi proved to be a most consistent, albeit at times reluctant, supporter of his nephew/son-in-law Sebele. In the end, the BaKwena and all of the other *merafe* sent delegations to Kopong. Sebele was empowered to represent the waning Sechele, a development that serves as a benchmark for the beginning of the son's effective reign as acting Kgosi.[62] In the meetings aftermath Shippard would observe that: "Even Kgosidintsi who has hitherto professed the utmost friendliness towards the English, seems by all accounts to be doing his utmost to support Sebele in his opposition to any proposal whereby the Bakwena might be called upon to contribute towards the cost of maintaining the British Protectorate."[63]

Although it was dissolved after its inaugural sitting the

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61. BNA PP 1/3/3 Shippard to Robinson, Dec. 6, 1888. Shippard included "the tortures inflicted at the period of compulsory circumcision" among the burdens that would lead BaTswana to welcome the overthrow of *bogosi* in favor of the Queen's "just and merciful law."

62. PRO CO 879/30/372 Administrator to Governor, Jan. 31, 1889.

63. BNA PP 1/3/3 Shippard to Robinson, Feb. 6, 1889. Kgosidintsi's opposition to Hut Tax also noted in BNA HC 26/33 Moffat to Shippard, March 15, 1889.

great *pitso* at Kopong was a important turning point.[64] The first such gathering since the Civil Wars, it gave rise to renewed division as well as unity. On one hand the various polities of the southern Protectorate, except for the BaLete, coalesced into an enduring prehension of their essential integrality.[65] Bathoen, Linchwe, and Sebele thus became allies. For the next two decades, despite occasional border squabbles and other differences between them, they maintained a common front when challenged by administrative attempts to further erode their autonomy. In the process their coalition of circumstance evolved towards a nationalist tendency.

On the the other hand Khama, while jealous of his own rights as a ruler, initially spurned the southern consensus with the result that he was for a period ostracized: "Khama who is thoroughly loyal and sincerely attached to the English appears to be completely isolated. He is left out of all the private meetings of the Protectorate Chiefs and seems to be regarded by them with suspicion and dislike as 'the white

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64. BNA PP 1/3/3 "Minutes of meeting of Bechuana Chiefs held at Kopong on Tuesday the 5th and Wednesday the 6th February 1889." The BaKwena delegation, led by Sebele, included his brothers Kgari and Motsatsi. Other diKgosi present: Khama, Linchwe, Bathoen, Pilane (BagaMmanaana), Gaberone (BaTlokwa), Kontle (BaHurutse booManyana), Ikaneng (BaLete), and Kgari Macheng (pretender to the BaNgwato *bogosi*), and "about 1,500 followers who were all present at the meeting." The *pitso* coincided with a generational shift in *bogosi*. In addition to Sebele, Bathoen was representing the now dieing Gaseitsiwe, while, within months, Pilane would be succeeded by his son Baitirile. Ikaneng had also only recently assumed *bogosi*, while the BaTawana, who had not yet been incoporated into the Protectorate and were thus absent, would soon (1891) come under Sekgoma Lesolathebe.

65. The Balete ruler Ikaneng, possibly motivated by a desire to win imperial support for disputed claims to *bogosi as well as his morafe's* independence from the BaNgwaketse, disassociated himself from the other southern diKgosi at Kopong and for the next few years generally cooperated with Shippard.

man's friend."[66] While it would be misleading to downplay the role of other actors it is also fair to add that in the *pitso's* aftermath it was the MoKwena who, by pedigree, plight, and personal temperament, was cast as chief protagonist to the MoNgwato in an implicit debate over SeTswana identity and tactics. In the process a synthesis was formed between their positions which would significantly shape the relationship between *bogosi* and the colonial state. It is therefore unfortunate that their relationship has been generally ignored despite Chirenje's apt critique:

> "In the middle of 1889 Sebele, son of Sechele, tried in vain to persuade Kgama to adopt a pan-Tswana and anti-British attitude....If Sebele was a symbol of Tswana resistance to colonial rule, Kgama was certainly a paradigm of a collaborator, and his support for British rule seems to have become more pronounced after the Kopong conference."[67]

The Conference's sole formal session was held in the late afternoon of Tuesday, February 5, 1889. Besides Shippard, Bathoen, Linchwe, and Sebele were the only speakers. The Deputy Commissioner, having already been mildly reprimanded for his injudicious agenda, began the proceedings with a statement conceding his inability to press for agreement on most of the items listed in his circular. He opened discussion

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66. BNA PP 1/3/3 Shippard to Robinson, Feb. 6, 1889. Also HC 26/34 Lt. Lochner (BBP at Shoshong) to Carrington, March 15, 1889: "Khama says Chiefs below blame Khama for inviting white men in and backing them against other Chiefs to the point of fighting for them."

67. J. Mutero Chirenje *Chief Kgama and his Times c. 1835-1923: The Story of a Southern African Ruler* (Rex Collings, London 1978) pp. 27-28. Chirenje also produced a very preliminary, unpublished, paper- "Chief Sebele I and his Times c. 1842-1911: The difficult career of a Kwena Chief" for the Conference of Southern African History, Gaborone, Botswana, September 1973 (copy in Botswana Collection of University of Botswana Library) which at least suggested the need for a post-colonial re-appraisal of Sebele. LMS Lloyde, July (?) 1889, reports that Khama rejected the "covenant" put forward by Sebele for greater unity among the *merafe*.

on the topic of "the measures requisite for the effectual and permanent defence of the Protectorate against invasion including the establishment of fortified camps for the Bechuanaland Border Police at suitable places." In introducing this subject he attempted, without success, to frighten the diKgosi into subordination with the bogey of Boer filibusters.[68] In response, the three southern diKgosi stated that they already had their own defensive alliance and simply hoped to have continued access to arms and ammunition. They further indicated that any discussion of placing their *mephato* under British military command was premature, that no Boer attack was likely unless instigated by the British, and that in the case of the appearance of filibusters, their first instinct would be to notify the Kruger government. The words of the three on their relationship with the Boers and British, as well as each other, is notable in light of the mythology which has since grown around nineteenth century BaTswana perceptions of British "protection." Declared Linchwe:

> "We ought to like both the English and the Boers and not be one-sided. I like everybody and do not dislike anyone. I do not wish either the Boers or the English to come and take our chieftainship away from us. All Bechuanas should fight together. God will protect us if the Protectorate is withdrawn, and God is the greatest Protector."

With their words they also reached out to their compatriots. Sebele, well aware that Ikaneng was looking for Shippard's assistance in alleviating his people's land shortage, reversed himself by unilaterally giving the BaLete

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68. A week earlier Shippard, to the consternation of his superiors, had gone much further by suggesting to the BaNgwaketse that war with the SAR was imminent- PRO CO 879/30/372 Robinson to Knutsford, Feb. 12, 1889 enclosing Shippard to Robinson, Jan. 29, 1889.

permission to plow in his territory.[69] For his part Linchwe, referring to Khama, warned the BaNgwato: "I wish he could have peace in his country. The trouble is that I see the gold diggers in the country want to deceive us."

At the meeting the southern leaders had been careful to temper their steadfast defence of the status quo with verbal concessions that left openings for further discussion. Despite this the Deputy Commissioner abruptly terminated the *pitso* at dawn on Wednesday just as the people gathered for its scheduled second sitting. His words of departure must have been revealing, possibly even encouraging, to those whose "defiant attitude" he found so "unsatisfactory":

> "This country is regarded by us at present to all appearence a poor one and its only material value to the English arises from the fact that through it lies the road to a far richer and finer country above....There is a party in the English Parliament which grudges any outlay on Bechuanaland and which for many reasons would gladly see the Protectorate withdrawn. You act unwisely in playing as you now do into the hands of that party in whose estimation the diversion of the trade route through railway construction in the Transvaal would afford one reason for withdrawing the present Protectorate, while your refusal to contribute towards the cost of the Protectorate or meet the wishes of Her Majesty's Government in any way would, if made known publicly, undoubtedly furnish another."

An interesting sidelight to the Kopong affair is the report that Sebele proposed to Khama that the they should open fire "on the white people."[70] What is the truth of this allegation? It seems unlikely that Sebele would have seriously

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69. For Sebele's previous attitude vis-a-vis Balete plowing- BNA H.C. 93/29 Interview between Sebele and Shippard at Vryburg, Feb. 23, 1888; and PP 1/3/3 Shippard to Robinson, Dec. 6, 1888. Also H.C. 20/11 interview between Shippard and Ikaneng, March 30, 1888. HC 5/42 Carrington to Shippard, May 12, 1886.

70. BNA PP 1/3/3 Shippard to Robinson, Feb. 6, 1889; and Lochner to Carrington, Feb. 15, 1889.

proposed such a drastic and futile action and even less plausible that he would have approached Khama to join such a conspiracy. The story is, in fact, consistent with Khama's then emerging predilliction to spread disinformation about his neighbors, most especially Sebele and Linchwe. A notable aspect of his allegation was his accompanying offer to provide military support against the southerners.

Given that Shippard's actions before, during, and immediately after Kopong placed him at loggerheads with the prevailing policies and prejudices of the Colonial Office, the question is raised as to what caused him to suddenly push so aggressively for a radically expanded colonial presence? By 1888 he had completely subordinated his public office to the private interests of Rhodes. This verdict has been prosecuted elsewhere and thus need be no more than outlined here.[71]

Shippard and Rhodes had become good friends at Oxford where, in the former's words, they had "discussed and sketched out the whole plan of British advance in South and Central Africa."[72] A decade later, the Deputy Commissioner was in the process of playing a pivotal role in the realization of their "plan" when he revealed his designs to the BaKwena and others. At the time Shippard was on his way northward to hold an

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71. See, in particular, Paul Maylam *Rhodes, the Tswana, and the British; Colonialism, Collaboration, and Conflict in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1885-1899* (Greenwood Press, Westport Conn. etc. 1980.)

72. Sidney Shippard "Bechuanaland," J. Scott Keltie (edit.) *British Empire Series*, (Kegan, Tranch, & Trubner, London 1899), vol. 2, pp. 51-52. Their mutual meglomania was not confined to Africa, Shippard was a trustee in the famous first will in which Rhodes directed that his worldly assets be used to finance "the establishment, promotion, and development of a Secret Society, the true aim and object whereof shall be the extension of British rule throughout the world" (subsequently refined into the Rhodes Scholarship foundation.)

enquiry into the death of one Piet Grobler who had been fatally wounded during a skirmish with a party of BaNgwato.[73] In July 1887 Grobler had succeeded through means fair or, as is more likely, foul in negotiating a, initially secret, treaty of "friendship" between the SAR and the AmaNdebele.[74] This treaty could have complicated Rhodes' own ambitions for the domains of Lobengula. As it was Grobler's enquiry provided Shippard with an opening to consolidate his defacto paramountcy over the area lying north of the Protectorate. Of greater significance was the cover that the crisis provided for the Deputy Commissioner's personal intervention at Bulawayo on behalf of the infamous Rudd Concession, which became the foundation of Rhodesia. It is relevant to add that Shippard's boss, Robinson, was also an early and active backer of the "Rhodes-Rudd combination" despite the Colonial Office's rebuff of his July 1888 proposal that he make official his already ongoing "assistance or support to C.J. Rhodes' scheme for the development of Bechuanaland by means of a chartered commercial company."[75]

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73. Khama had dispatched a regiment into the Disputed Territory supposedly to intercept Francis and Chapman who following their seizure at Shoshong and subsequent escapes were once more proceeding to Matebeleland via the Transvaal. On three occasions the *mephato* initiated attacks on Grobler's party, albeit not without provocation. Grobler was wounded during the second engagement which occurred when members of the *mephato* tried to ambush the Boers at the end of a parley.- BPP C.5918 Evidence of Enquiry held between Aug. 29 and Sept. 7, 1888 enclosed in Shippard to Robinson, Sept. 9, 1888. Related papers in C.5524. PRO 879/29/358. Also Sillery *Founding a Protectorate* chapter 9. Paul Kruger *Memiors* vol. 1, pp. 214-16. A. Schultz & A. Hammar *The New Africa: A Journey up the Chobe and down the Okavango Rivers*, (Heinemann, London 1897) pp. 388-90.

74. PRO CO 879/30/369 Kruger to Robinson, Aug. 29, 1888 (also in BPP C.5918.) The text recognized AmaNdebele sovereignty and provided for their rendering of militarily assistance to the SAR. It also gave the SAR's consul (Grobler) extra-territorial civil jurisdiction over his fellow citizens, an authority Lobengula subsequently refused to recognize.

In the months which followed the Rudd Concession, Shippard and Robinson continued to give Rhodes critical support in his battle to have BSAC monopoly rights recognized against rival claimants and AmaNdebele protests. Through biased memos, mail tampering, gunrunning and various other deceits the two paved the way for the granting of the Royal Charter to the BSAC in October of 1889.[76] The Charter placed the Protectorate within the BSAC's sphere of operations, a development which opened the door for Rhodes' ultimate vision: "A glance at the map will show that the territory north of Mafeking, including Mashonaland and Matebeleland, will naturally form one State, and my desire is that nothing should mar this conception."[77] As Maylam has pointed out the Protectorate's transfer was delayed at the behest of Rhodes, himself, who for the time being was content to have the imperial government pick up the tab for the maintenance of his "Suez Canal into the interior." Hence the Protectorate administration continued to be financed out of the imperial budget, while serving Chartered Company interests.

In understanding how the BSAC was able to exercise thorough control over the Protectorate's civil and para-military services one is, again, indebted to Maylam for re-focusing attention on the almost forgotten controversy over the distribution of the Company's shares.[78] From 1888 Protectorate officials were incorporated into Rhodes' transcontinental network of patronage. At the top of the local spoils system sat Robinson who would eventually acquire no less than 6,250 shares in Rhodes' United Concessions Company. Although Shippard would retire to a place on the BSAC Board

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75. PRO CO 879/30/372 Robinson, July 21, 1888; and confidential reply of Aug. 20, 1888. Maylam, pp. 51-52.
76. Maylam, pp. 50-55.
77. PRO CO 879/52/552 Rhodes to Loch, July 17, 1894.
78. Maylam, pp. 129-31, 138.

of Trustees his "name is conspicuous for its absence from various shareholder lists." His deputy and successor Francis Newton held 800 Chartered shares. Among the BBP Carrington and his number three officer, Major Raleigh Grey, held no less than 3,000 shares each, while the second in command, Goold-Adams, held 900. Eleven other BBP officers had 200 shares each.

Another company man was J.S. Moffat whose ties were above board. During his tenure as Assistant Commissioner he, faithfully following the wishes of his mentor Robinson, had been a key player in the events surrounding the Rudd concession.[79] After the granting of the Charter he was given a semi-leave of absence from his Protectorate duties and was placed on the BSAC payroll as the imperial resident in Bulawayo.

The third major pillar, in addition to the civil and military-police establishments, supporting the BSAC presence within the Protectorate during the early years of the Charter was Khama. In December of 1889 Shippard wrote to Khama, alone among the diKgosi, saying: "The British South Africa Company has received from Her Majesty most extensive powers not only over the whole Bechuanaland Protectorate, but up to the Chobe and Zambezi rivers and far beyond..."[80] While reassuring Khama that the Company did not intend to "interfere in any way with your rights and powers in the Government of your own country and people" he further noted "Mr. Rhodes hopes to have your support and assistance in his great work of carrying the blessings of civilization not only into Matebeleland and Mashonaland, but, in due time and with God's blessing,

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79. For a sympathetic portrayal of Moffat's role see Robert U. Moffat's biography of his father *John Smith Moffat* (John Murray, London 1921.)

80. PRO CO 879/32/392 Shippard to Khama, Dec. 16, 1889.

throughout the interior of Africa."[81] The Deputy Commissioner concluded with the sentence: "I heartily commend to you this noble task and also my esteemed friend, Mr. Cecil Rhodes, who will be represented by Mr. Heany, whom you already know well, and who will deliver to you this letter."[82]

In his reply to Shippard, Khama dictated: "I trust I may be always found ready to give all the help in my power to open the interior to the blessings of God's Book, and all the blessings which the English people have brought to me and my people, and to help the English Government in every way in which I gave my promise to you at Kapong to be ready to do."[83] Khama also sent a similar reply on the same day to "Maurice Heany, Esq., Representative of the Hon. Cecil Rhodes of the Royal Charter Company."[84] A notable aspect of both letters was the Kgosi's offer to provide military assistance in future efforts against the AmaNdebele, whom he castigated as a nation of murderers.[85]

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81. By this time Khama was already playing such a role. On Nov. 27, 1889 he wrote Lewanika of the MaLozi to urge him to sign a concession agreement with Rhodes' agent Lochner (who earlier in the year was the BBP officer at Shoshong) rather than "self-seeking" rivals. In his letter he noted that Lochner had the means to make the MaLozi as prosperous as the Bechuanaland Exploration Company (below) had made the BaNgwato. Lewanika's concession to Lochner became the initial basis for BSAC claims north of the Zambezi.

82. In April of 1887 Maurice Heany together with Frank Johnson had obtained a mining concession from Khama, PRO CO 879/32/392 "Agreement between Khama and the Northern Goldfields Exploration Syndicate," April 16, 1887, which they subsequently managed on behalf of the Bechuanaland Exploration Company, whose principal board members had during the early months of 1889 come to an understanding with Rhodes- Maylam p. 53 Thereafter Rhodes looked to the two to "manage" his relations with the BaNgwato court. Also Frank Johnson *Great Days: The Autobiography of an Empire Builder* (G. Bell, London 1940.)

83. PRO CO 879/32/392 Khama to Shippard, Jan. 1, 1890.

84. PRO CO 879/32/392 Khama to Heany, Jan. 1, 1890.

85. Heany had confided the company's general intentions towards the AmaNdebele to Khama who concluded his letter to

During the fortieth anniversary of destruction of the Lobengula's Kingdom, the MoNgwato patriot Simon Ratshosa justifiably protested that Khama's immense contributions to the creation of Rhodesia had been ignored "because of racial prejudice against colour."[86] From 1889 until 1893 the new BaNgwato capital of Palapye did in fact serve as the springboard for the Rhodes-ian push into south-central Africa.[87] "Khama's Country" prospered through the provision of logistical and manpower support for the 1890 invasion of Mashonaland by the Pioneer Column and the servicing of the resulting overland flow of men and materials.[88] When the inevitable war with the AmaNdebele broke out, in 1893, Khama's collaboration with the Company climaxed with his supply of some 1,900 troops, more than 1,000 requested of him, to assist

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the same with: "I am glad to know that civil Government will be at once established in the Matebele country for preserving order and peace in the country." Herbert Loch, who had just replaced Robinson as High Commissioner, was greatly disturbed by "the impression produced on Khama's mind" and instructed Shippard, PRO CO 879/32/392, Jan. 22, 1890: "You will, I hope also, impress on all the officers of the police, as well as the Chartered Company, the necessity for exercising restraint in their conversations with the natives."

86. Neil Parsons "Shots for a Black Republic? Simon Ratshosa and Botswana Nationalism" *African Affairs* vol. 73, no. 293 1974, pp. 449-58- p. 450, citing Ratshosa letter to the *Bulawayo Chronicle* of March 11, 1933. Also BNA MSS 3-Ratshosa's unpublished 1931 M.S. "My Book on he Bechuanaland Protectorate" where, pp. 123, 129, he further complains about white Rhodesian unwillingness to build a monument to BaNgwato participation in the conquest of the AmaNdebele; earlier M.S. in BNA S 598/1-2 and S 43/7.

87. Khama moved his capital from Shoshong to Palapye in the austral winter of 1889.

88. Neil Parsons "The Economic History of Khama's Country in Botswana, 1844-1930," in *The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa*, Robin Palmer and Neil Parsons (edits.), (Heinemann, 1977) pp. 113-43- pp. 122-25 Chirenje, *Chief Kgama*, pp. 28, 52. Henry Bryden *Gun and Camera in Southern Africa: A Year of Wanderings in Bechuanaland* (Edward Stanford, London 1893) p. 261. Frank Johnson was hired to organize the column- *Great Days*, pp. 94-101.

the BBP and Company forces.[89] In this war the participation of Khama's men, along with the bulk of the BBP under Goold-Adams, contributed to the settler triumph despite subsequent Company attempts to discredit their contributions.

In the immediate aftermath of Kopong there was imperial concern that Sebele and his allies were girding themselves for armed resistance against the expanded presence of the BBP. The principal source of this anxiety was Khama. In March 1889 he followed up his previous months charges of an aborted uprising at Kopong by informing his constable that his people, from "somewhere in the territory of Chief Sechele and Linchwe," had reported that a dozen messengers had been sent by Sechele to the Boer government, and that the BaKwena were also holding daily meetings against the BBP.[90] Fortunately on the same day that this rumor was flowering at Shoshong, Moffat wrote from Molepolole that he did not expect any difficulty from the BaKwena over the passage of police.[91]

BaKwena resentment at the time was undoubtedly real enough, but so was their sense of caution. When Sechele attempted to place restrictions on his previous permission for the police to dig wells in his territory he was bluntly warned

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89. PRO 879/39/459 Loch to Moffat, Sept. 29; Loch to Goold-Adams, Oct. 3; Loch to Ripon, Oct. 11; Goold-Adams to Loch, Oct. 14, 1893. Chirenje, *Chief Kgama*, p. 52. Maylam, pp. 120-23. Khama was paid L 1,000 for his *mephato's* services.

90. BNA HC 26/34 Lochner to Carrington, March 15, 1889. Lochner expressed his faith in Khama's information because "no Bamangwato would lie to Khama."

91. BNA HC 26/33 Moffat to Shippard, March 15, 1889. Also HC 25/42 Trp. Oosthuizen to Capt Bates BBP, Feb. 12, 1889, reporting that Sechele said police should leave with Shippard. Sechele told Oosthuizen, in fact, that he could stay and ride post but he did not want him to act like a spy. HC 27/6 BBP report to Moffat, April 4, 1889; which apparently follows HC 26/33 (synopsis of file contained in BNA catalogue, original file among those not returned from Rhodesia in 1976.)

by Carrington that any interference could result in the destruction of Molepolole.[92] Despite this Sebele joined the other southern diKgosi, in October 1890, in voicing their objections to continued well sinking before Loch, during the High Commissioner's "Durbar" at Crocodile Pools.[93] By his own account, Loch was on this occasion able to reach an agreement with the diKgosi authorizing the continued sinking of wells by government officers with the proviso that they then be placed under the control of the local Kgosi; the diKgosi's major concern being that "whoever sank a well acquired, by so doing, proprietership over the land."[94] Thus Sebele feared betrayal when immediately after Loch's departure, Carrington requested that his men be allowed to graze as well as make pits along the Metsemotlhaba: "I see you ask a thing, and if you cannot get it by asking you take it, and if I object you do it all the same."[95] The principal of "Tribal" ownership of wells was, nonetheless, maintained.

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92. Maylam, p. 36 (citing CO 417/33 Bruce to Carrington, Aug. 23, 1889 and Carrington to Shippard, Sept. 12, 1889.) Previous permission in BNA PP 1/3/3 Shippard to Robinson, Dec. 6, 1888. Sillery *Founding a Protectorate*, p. 143, notes that the Protectorate administration at the time wished to embark on a major water boring scheme which was vetoed by the Colonial Office: "That water can be found by boring is the favorite hallucination of the Bechuanaland officials."

93. PRO 879/33/403 Loch to Knutsford, Nov. 20, 1890. This was the first time a High Commissioner or "Tautona" had toured the Protectorate. The meeting established a precedent for the southern diKgosi and their followers to meet in *pitso* during tours by the High Commissioner (most of whom probably saw their part of the gathering as a durbar) and other special occasions within that portion of Kweneng which, after 1903, was gazetted as the Gaberones Block. Khama did not attend these meetings. The only occasion in which Khama seems to have joined the other diKgosi in *pitso* after Kopong was at the time of the 1895 mission to London.

94. PRO 879/33/403 Loch to Knutesford, Nov. 20, 1890.

95. PRO CO 879/33/403 Sebele to Surmon, Oct. 22, 1890.

In addition to the steadily growing demands, and numbers, of the Police the issue which most vexed BaKwena-British relations in the months following Kopong was the extension of the telegraph. Initially this does not appear to have been an issue of great concern to the BaKwena; during the Warren expedition a telegraphic system using signal balloons, heliograph, as well as wire had been temporarily extended to Molepolole with little apparent fuss.[96] By Kopong Sebele, along with Bathoen, had adopted the position that the telegraph, as well as any railway, must be placed along their eastern frontiers. Both were aware of the linkage between upgraded communications and land alienation and were thus eager to confine such projects to their territorial periphery. Their choice of location was, furthermore, a reflection of their desire to channel the Colonial push to the north while, at the same time creating a "shield" between themselves and the

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96. This is notwithstanding the following doggerel composed by an anonymous sergeant with the Expedition: "Then there were telegraphists, their poles all in a row, Which when they hadn't tumbled down, brought news from down below- Brought news of other soldiers, and the victories they won, While we sat still and grumbled, for our sport had not begun. One day the Engineers, who were possessed of a balloon, Sent old chief Montsioa up a captive toward the moon, And, oh! it was a stirring sound to hear his women swear When they saw their lord and master floating gaily thro' the air. For tis the usual belief in Montsioa's town That when a chieftain dies he takes a lengthy journey down; While a missionary murmered, as he gazed up in the sky, 'Tis strange that soldiers are the first to start my flock on high'."- excerpted from "The Bechuanaland Tinpot Medal," in Chatwick, pp. 26-7. The heliograph was withdrawn with the expedition- LMS Wookey, Sept. 7, 1885 for its abandonment at Molepolole- but was re-introduced by the 1890, before the completion of the telegraph.

Transvaal.[97] What ultimately proved to be of the greatest concern to the diKgosi, however, was the question of whose hand should bear the shield.

In June of 1889, as part of his negotiations for the Charter, Rhodes had assumed responsibility for the extension of the telegraph as far as Tati.[98] The following month he and his associates further committed themselves to build a railway through British Bechuanaland, the first step towards fulfilling the grand vision of a line linking the Cape to Cairo.[99] In light of these facts it is intriguing that in September of 1889 Sebele and Sechele, with the consent of the Kgotla, signed a concession granting what was shortly thereafter registered as the Secheleland Concessions Syndicate "the sole right to build and construct railways, electric telegraphs and telephones, and lighting by electricity or otherwise to construct tramways, and build bridges for a period of fifty years."[100] Shippard disallowed this concession on account of its conflict with the monopoly powers granted

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97. PRO CO 879/33/403 Sebele to Loch, Nov. 4, 1890: "The border is the hand that bears the shield, and no shield should be behind a man. I never meant that the telegraph line should run on the Transvaal side of the border but that it should run through on this side, so that it should be evidence to define the line between the Boers and myself." In this strategy Bathoen and Sebele were fundamentally in accord with Khama.

98. PRO 879/30/372 Rhodes to Colonial Office, June 1, 1889; Colonial Office to Rhodes, June 14, 1889.

99. PRO 879/30/372 Crawston to Colonial Office, July 1, 1889. Also Maylam, pp. 78-96, for detailed discussion of Rhodes and the railway.

100. BNA HC 199/1 & RC 3/11 (also in PRO 879/50/537) Minutes and Report of the Concessions Commission. The concession was dated Sept. 9, 1889. A few weeks earlier Bathoen had signed a similar concession.

to the Chartered Company.[101] In response, the Syndicate's agent challenged the Crown's authority in the matter by citing the "sovereignty of Sechele" as well as the fact that his clients' concession predated the Charter (by exactly 50 days.)[102]

The Syndicate's arguments were, in fact, consistent with the opinion of Loch's own legal advisor: "That the delegation to the British South Africa Company of legal jurisdiction founded upon the due acceptance of the proposals referred to (ie. those of Khama, Gaseitsiwe, and Sechele to Warren), would be an act requiring for its validity the approval or consent of the Chiefs concerned."[103] The fact that the Syndicate included at least one English M.P. and one of Johannesburg's most prominent attorneys meant that its claims would have to be taken seriously.[104] But in 1890 the BSAC telegraph moved forward. Aware of the weakness of his position Shippard resorted to simply stonewalling the concessionaires. In addition he deployed ever greater numbers of BBP, whose presence was justified to the Colonial Office by exaggerated reports of local resistance, as a manifestation of the true

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101. BNA HC 30/24 Knutesford to Loch, Dec. 19, 1889 and HC 80/24 Loch to Shippard, Jan. 16, 1889. Shippard's action was taken in accordance with the Govt. Notice of March 27, 1888 (op.cit.) In November 1889 Shippard, at Rhodes request, drafted a proclamation which would have invalidated all rival concessions within the Chartered Co. newly proclaimed field of operations but this was overruled at the Colonial Office- PRO 879/30/372 Shippard to Smyth, Nov. 28, 1889 and Knutesford to Loch, Jan. 3, 1890.

102. BNA HC 84/17 Edgar Waugh to Loch, July 27, 1890 w/follow up correspondence.

103. PRO 879/32/392 Loch to Knutesford, June 17, 1890, proposal for annexation, enclosing opinion by W.P. Schreiner, June 10, 1890.

104. The M.P., A.A. Baumann drafted a protest to the Colonial Office, Aug. 1, 1892- PRO CO 879/37/441, the Chairman of the Syndicate was Charles Leonard (below.)

source of his local authority.[105] Besides filing their own protests, the reactions of the three southern leaders were limited to the withholding of their people's labor from the construction crews.[106] In June, Moffat reported of Sebele that "his attitude to the telegraph may be ascribed as sullen acquiescence in the inevitable."[107] But, at least for the record, Sebele drafted a strong protest to Loch against the actions of Carrington and Shippard, as well as the telegraph. In it he bitterly concluded:

> "As you know yourself, Chief, my wish is to remain independent. I do not want a magistrate. I want only independence. As to protection I say nothing. I liked it, but I do not like it anymore...We have received no assistance from you; all we have got from you is trouble."[108]

The role played by the Secheleland Syndicate, as well as the similar Gaseitsiwe Concession in Gangwaketse, in resistance to the telegraph raises the broader historical issue of whether at least some of the concessions leased by Bathoen, Linchwe, and Ikaneng, as well as Sebele, were entered into as part of a conscious strategy to recruit allies, and

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105. PRO 879/32/392 various correspondences (including helio/telegrams): Khama's false report that Linchwe and the other diKgosi were involved in dangerous plots with AmaNedabele- Khama to Shippard, June 6, 1890, also Carrington: (in context of contingencies against the Southern Protectorate) "Khama is still prepared to send me the 2,000 men he promised me last year."- Carrington to Shippard, July 19, 1890; also report of Sebele interfering with a trader- Carrington to Shippard, June 24, 1890 (Rev. Williams to Shippard, July 8, 1890 helped to establish that the incident was a minor misunderstanding); and Linchwe's people interfering with telegraph- Shippard to Loch, Aug. 2, 16, 1890 etc.

106. PRO 879/32/392 Shippard to Loch, May 16, 1890, Only the BaLete cooperated among the southerners, Ikaneng to Shipperd, June 17, 1890.

107. PRO 879/32/392 Moffat to Shippard, June 11, 1890. Also BNA HC 177/4 Moffat to Shippard, June 6, 1890.

108. PRO CO 879/32/392 Sebele to Loch, Nov. 4, 1890.

create legal conditions, favorable to their struggle against the threat of Cape Colonial interests.'[109] In support of such a contention, Fred Morton has cited a number of common features which characterize the concessions granted by the above diKgosi between 1888 and 1893. Included among these traits is the knowledge that the concessions in question remained free of Rhodes-ian control prior to the 1893 Concessions Commission, that they were given to either local traders, or men recommended by them, who enjoyed the confidence of the diKgosi, and that the same diKgosi did not waver in their support of the concessions despite the seemingly extravagent claims attached to some of them. On this latter point it should be further noted that by 1891 colonial authorities had reached the conclusion that monetary offers would not constitute a sufficient inducement for the diKgosi to abandon their agreements.'[110] Such a revisionist argument challenges the orthodox opinion that the diKgosi out of desperation and/or greed were often hoodwinked into signing documents whose import they little understood:

> "Not suprisingly when European-concession-hunters came with legal documents for the chiefs to sign, the Africans could not conceivably have grasped the implications of what they were signing, especially in the case of grants pertaining to land rights: Their culture orientation did not encompass private ownership of land, let alone the alienation thereof

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109. This argument was discussed during the 1985-86 University of Botswana Department of History seminar series marking the centenary of the "Founding of the Protectorate," notably in Fred Morton's draft (for discussion purposes only) "The Threat from the South: The Kgatla, the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and the BSA Company, 1885-1895," Nov. 26, 1985.

110. O. Selolwane "Colonization by Concession. Capitalist Expansion in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. 1885-1950." *Pula*, vol. 2, no. 1 (Feb 1980), pp. 75-124, p. 87: BNA HC 182/1, Notes of Consultation between Loch, Shippard, Moffat, and Surmon, (n.d.) 1891.

as a commodity."[111]

The admittedly incomplete and often circumstantial evidence on the BaKwena concessions policy suggests a need to combine both historical views. In the following synthesis the proposition of African vulnerability is accepted as providing a context for, rather than contradiction to, the general hypothesis that political considerations played a central role in shaping the pattern of concessions in Kweneng.

Sebele, acting in Sechele's name, was responsible for two major concessions: those of the Secheleland Syndicate and Messrs. Gregor Riesle and James Nicholls. The latter agreement, signed in June of 1891, became a source of popular resentment against his rule. Nicholls and Reisle, both prominent members of the Mafikeng's nascent white establishment, claimed that in return for an annual rent of L 200 they were entitled to a perpetual land lease of 800 square miles.[112] This claim was officially challenged: "From the evidence adduced in support of the claim, we are of the opinion that that the extent of the ground claimed is far in excess of what the Chief intended to lease; that no ascertained extent of land was leased; and that the true extent and position of the land has still to be pointed out by the Chief."[113] Based on Sebele's account of the transaction, it appears to have been his intent to simply grant access to, rather than control over, water and

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111. Selolwane, p. 85.

112. At the time Nicholls was the town's only attorney and Riesle its resident jeweller- In *The General Directory of South Africa, 1890-91*, pp. 184-85. Reisle during the 1890s also served as the town's mayor. They also held controversial concessions in Gangwaketse and Ngamiland.

113. BNA RC 3/11 (also PRO 879/50/537) Report of Concessions Commission.

pasture within the disputed zone between himself and Khama.[114] He may thus have hoped to bolster his own territorial claims due to the pro-Khama biases of Shippard and Carrington. Although personal avarice should not be discounted as a motive, it is also worth noting that the Kgosi is said to have told his people that he needed to raise funds for a trip to England.[115] Taking such qualifications into account the fact remains that the Kgosi had failed to consult the Kgotla before signing onto what was, under any circumstance, a reckless agreement.[116]

As soon as the BaKwena Kgotla found out about the concession they repudiated it and attempted, unsuccessfully, to refund Nicholls and Reisle's money.[117] In taking this stand the councillors expressed their disapproval of any land grants and, furthermore, voiced concern about provoking the BaNgwato. For his failure Sebele was rebuked with the warning that through such acts he would forfeit his rights to *bogosi*. Curiously in March of 1893 the Kgosi together with the Kgotla

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114. BNA HC 114/2 & 3 (two copies) Sebele interview w/Loch at Govt. House Cape Town, June 9, 1892. Except for the Lephepe wells the BaKwena-BaNgwato border was undemarcated and vigorously contested at the time.

115. BNA HC 114/1 Shippard to Loch, March 3 & 7, 1892. In his Cape Town interview Sebele was told by Loch that it might be possible for him to travel to England.

116. Sebele admitted this to Loch in his Cape Town interview: "I had fallen into a pit which had been dug through want of proper counsel."

117. The money was placed in Kgosidintsi's care after Nicholls and Reisle refused it. BNA HC 182/1 Williams to Surmon, July 21, 1891 etc; and HC 90/3 Loch to Shippard, Dec. 12, 1891. Also HC 114/1-3 various correspondence. PRO 879/78/702 "Notes of discussion between Chief Sebele, his headmen, and Mr. Riesle re Land Concession, June 6, 1898; and CO 879/57/574, petition by Kgosidintsi and 9 others to Ellenburger, Jan. 6, 1899.

foolishly ratified a modified version of the deal."[118] Clearly members of the *morafe*, most especially Sebele, had been incautious, though perhaps not entirely uncalculated, in their negotiations.

The history of the Secheleland Syndicate is wrapped in conspiracies of a grander scale. It began as the assignee of four separate concessions made out to a Mr. Sidney Morris. The first three, signed between August of 1889 and January of 1890 conferred upon Morris, in addition to the previously noted communications monopolies, sole rights to prospect, mine, and engage in most forms commerce in return for an annual payment of £ 650. In addition a final grant was signed in June of 1890 that, without the known rendering of payment, went beyond ratifying the first three agreements. It conferred upon the Syndicate the right "to make ordinances, establish courts of justice, establish and maintain a force of police, regulate the traffic in intoxicating liquors and suppress slavery, to fix and establish tariffs and charges and to remove officials, officers and other servants."[119]

The timing as well as scope of the Secheleland agreements suggests that the Syndicate members used them to block the designs of the Chartered Company. It is possible

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118. BNA HC 134/1 (also PRO CO 879/50/537) Sebele and 17 others to Messrs. G. Riesle and J.A. Nicholls: agreement dated March 1, 1893, (ie. only a few days prior to the sitting of the Concessions Commission.) From the various references cited above it appears that the BaKwena were led to believe that they were bound by the administration, as represented by Assist. Comm. Surmon, to reach some sort of arrangement with Riesle and that any lease would only be applicable to land east of the Ngotwane. Further on Surmon role in HC 114/1, Alloway to Loch, Jan. 12, 1892; and I.S. to Shippard, Feb. 22, 1892.

119. BNA 199/1 List of Claims before the Concessions Commission, March 7, 1893.

that Sebele and his Kgotla shared in this motivation, albeit for very different reasons.[120] In 1893, the Kgosi refused to cooperate with the Concessions Commission. Instead he and the Syndicate submitted legal challenges to the right of "Her Majesty the Queen" to either appoint a commission, which interfered with his rights as "sovereign of the soil" or to in anyway confer upon the Chartered Company land rights within the territories of Sechele and Linchwe.[121] In his brief the Mokwena noted that he had neither been conquered nor had he ever ceded his sovereign rights to any government. Furthermore, he only recognized the responsibilty of Her Majesty's government as a "protecting power as against foreign powers or civilized nations." In taking such a stand Sebele was acting with the common knowledge that the Commission's purpose was to clear the ground for the Chartered Company control. But by so testing the voracity of the British lion he had placed himself in the position of the proverbial rabbit who finds a hungry jackal for its ally.

When he obtained the Secheleland Concession, Sydney Morris was a clerk in the employ of Eduard Lippert, "the concessions king."[122] During the 1880's and 1890's Lippert acquired a fortune on the Rand through the acquisition of

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120. At least those provisions which covered mineral rights and communications had been discussed by the *kgotla* which is not known to have ever raised any objections- BNA RC 3/11 (also PRO CO 879/50/537) Minutes & Report of the Concessions Commission.

121. BNA HC 118 & PRO 879/50/537 contain a summery of Sebele's protest by the Commission's Secretary, Ashburnham. Full text, submitted by Sebele's lawyer DeKock, was preserved but not located. Syndicate protest contained in the testimony of Charles Leonard.

122. Maylam, p. 134, footnote citing CO 417/80, note by Fairfield in a minute by Graham, Sept. 16, 1892 (not seen.) There is apparently no biography of Lippert, for a useful synopsis of his career on the Rand, as well as those of his brothers Ludwig and Wilhelm, see Paul Emden *Randlords* (Hodder & Stoughton, London 1935) pp. 327-332.

various SAR concessions. One notorious concession gave him a dynamite monopoly that enabled him to import "locally produced" explosives for resale at a 200% markup. In his various, nefarious, schemes he was consistently able to convince President Kruger and the Volksraad that by allocating such concessions to his "Hollander-German" group they were safeguarding themselves against the imperialism of "English" capitalists such as his cousin, and Rhodes' principal partner, Alfred Beit. His patriotism, while upsetting to fellow members in the Chamber of Mines, eventually led to his appointment as the Republic's Emissary to the Rand.[123] That he was also on the payroll of his native Germany does not appear to have fundamentally compromised his overridding loyalty to his own pocket. Perhaps the best illustration of his flexible approach to life can be found in the methods he and his allies employed to blackmail the infant Chartered Company by procuring concessions from the AmaNdebele and BaKwena.

In his efforts to share in the "Chartered Millions," Lippert was associated with two eminent Johannesburg attorneys, the brothers Charles and James Westin Leonard. That money makes bedfellows out of political strangers is the best explanation for this cabal. Charles, who acted as chairman of the Secheleland Syndicate, is best remembered as the leading advocate of Uitlander grievances prior to the Jameson Raid.[124] Although in his many attacks against the corruption of the Kruger government Charles included an occasional critique of

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123. Lippert was also a leading target of Kruger's Boer opponents who used the dynamite scandal, in particular, and fear of "Jewish rule," in general, in their near victory in the controversial 1893 SAR election- C.T. Gordon *The Growth of Boer Opposition to Kruger, 1890-1895*, (Oxford Univ. Press, Cape Town & New York, 1970.)

124. Charles Leonard was the leader of the Transvaal National Union and the Reform Committee, his tome- *Papers on the Political Situation in South Africa, 1885-1895* (Arthur L. Humphreys, London 1903.)

"Native policy" it was his brother J.W. who enjoyed the greater reputation as a champion of Africans. The latter's image as a "negrophilest" went back to his opposition to the Cape Diamond Trade Act of 1882.[125] On the eve of the Warren Expedition he had also been notably outspoken in his calls for Britain to "fulfill its obligation towards the native tribes of the Protectorate of Bechuanaland."[126] It was thus to Lippert's advantage to have J.W. act as his attorney for the purposes of putting his April 1891 "Humbug concession" with Lobengula "in proper form." On this occasion one of the "concession king's" Matebeleland agents, Renny-Tailyour, was able to convince the Nkosi to attach his royal elephant stamp, along with various signatures, to an otherwise blank sheet of paper, which was then forwarded to J.W. with what were allegedly notes in layman's language detailing the agreement. The resulting document, of course, contained a great deal more than had originally been specified.

Whether Sebele initially had any motive greater than L 650 per annum for joining forces with the Secheleland Syndicate is debatable. What is known are the political considerations that drove Lobengula into the deadly embrace of his syndicate, factors which may have shaped the similar concessions policies pursued by Bechuanaland rulers. Lobengula

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125. This act, which is sometimes cited by historians as a cornerstone in the creation of modern apartheid, introduced an array of new restrictions on African laborers in the Diamond Fields supposedly to combat the illicit diamond trade. Its leading advocate was Rhodes who can be said to launched his political career on the issue- Robert Rotberg *The Founder* (Oxford U. Press, 1988) pp. 137-38.

126. Full text in MacKenzie *Austral Africa* vol. 2, pp. 9-15. J.W. Leonard was at he time a prominent in Cape politics, he had served as Attorney General, leading some to exaggerate the importance of his support for the Expedition- see Stanley Hyatt *The Northward Trek* (Andrew Melrose, London 1909) pp. 44-45.

and his indunas granted Lippert concessions in a vain attempt to undercut the claims of the Chartered Company.[127] While the full story of how Lippert gained the AmaNdebele's trust only to betray it is too convoluted to be detailed here it is appropriate to emphasize that this trust was cultivated. Local agents, both European and African, working for Lippert had long been in the forefront of exposing and opposing the BSAC, through activities as grand organizing diplomatic missions to London and Berlin, and as simple as translating newspaper articles for the Nkosi. The AmaNdebele had good reason to take Lippert's talk of German and SAR support seriously.[128] Belief that "Offy" Shepstone, the commercial advisor to Nkosi Mbandzeni of Swaziland, was also part of the syndicate as well as Lippert's supposed vendetta against Rhodes and Beit are also said to have been lures.[129] There was also Shippard's action of having Tailyour arrested in the Tati following his negotiation of the April concession.[130]

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127. Here I have relied on Arthur Keppel-Jones detailed account in *Rhodes and Rhodesia, The White Conquest of Zimbabwe, 1884-1902* (Queens University Press, Montreal, 1983) pp. 172-84; and documents of J.S. Moffat in R.U. Moffat, pp. 254-261 (the principal primary source on the the concession, not seen, is the J.S. Moffat papers at the Zimbabwe National Archives.)

128. John S. Galbraith *Crown and Charter: The Early Years of the British South Africa Company* (Univ. of California Press, Berkley 1974) p. 272: PRO FO 84/2077, CO to FO, March 24, 1890- on Lippert seeking backing of German Govt. Also their was Lippert's association with the Ernest Hassformer who, in 1890, accompanied Lobengula's secretary, John Makhunga, to Germany. Lippert and the Leonards were also associated with the Adendorff trek.

129. Swazi connection: J.S. Galbraith, pp. 272-73. For Offy's own notorious career- Philip Bonner *Kings, Commoners and Concessionaires, The Evolution and Dissolution of the Nineteenth-Century Swazi State* (Cambridge U. Press 1983.) Alfred Biet's testimony had resulted in the inprisonment of Eduard's brother Wilhelm Lippert; Lobengula was not alone in his apparent belief that Lippert would never do a deal with Biet and Rhodes.

130. Shippard tried to justify his action with a warrant issued in the name of Khama. Tailyour escaped to the

As with Lobengula, Sebele, along with Bathoen and Linchwe, is known to have been influenced in his concessions policy by the advice of trusted local Europeans, notably Henry Boyne, whose business pursuits also included gun and gin running, and S.A.C.K. Alloway. Both individuals had supported the BaKwena and BaNgwaketse in various protests against colonial intrusion.[131] It is therefore ponderable that Boyne, who had married into the BaKwena, was the head of the Kanya Exploration Company, the chief concessionaire among the BaNgwaketse, while the, Kanye based, Alloway was the local manager of the Secheleland Syndicate.

Even before the arrest of Tailyour the "Humbug" and Secheleland conscessions were both being quietly offered to the BSAC for £ 250,000 and £ 100,000 respectively.[132] By September the Company had agreed to purchase, through its shares, the former concession providing it was confirmed by Lobengula. As a result Lippert set forth for Bulawayo to parley. There, thanks in large part to the feigned hostility of the British Government and BSAC, he was able to convince Lobengula and his indunas to sign a second concession, which became the legal basis for Southern Rhodesian land policy until the 1920s. The only immediate effect of this sellout on the Secheleland Syndicate was to raise its potential value. Charles Leonard used it to argue that the Chartered Company had admitted its monopoly powers were dependent upon obtaining consent from the "chiefs" rather than the Queen.[133] It was not until 1895 that BSAC sought to buy out the conscession. By then the resulting "negotiations" appear to have served as a convenient cover for Rhodes to communicate

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Transvaal and filed a formal protest. His case was then championed in London by the radical M.P. Henry Labouchere.

131. Others associated with Sebele and concessions were Piete Van Zyl and Richard Transveldt ("Kotwane".)

132. Maylam, p. 118. Kepple-Jones, p.178.

133. BNA RC 3/11 Minutes of Concessions Commission.

with his co-conspirators in his attempt to overthrow the SAR: "Secheleland concession, shareholders" serving as the codename of Leonard's Johannesburg rebels whose planned uprising, "shareholders meeting," was financed through the BSAC's "New Concessions Account."[134] Ironically, it was the concession's "flotation," that is the invasion of Jameson's Raiders, which proved to be the ultimate salvation of the BaKwena.[135] In the late nineteenth century it was only through such extraordinary circumstance that Africans could reasonably hope to gain by playing the concessions game with the ruthless likes of Lippert, Rhodes, and the Leonards.

Part 3: Better British than Buried

The tangled legal issues raised by competing concessions helped to concentrate imperial minds on the question of the extent of Britain's de jure authority within the Protectorate. In June 1890 Loch cited "concession questions" to lobby unsuccessfully for Imperial annexation rather than Chartered Company control.[136] Although the Colonial Office remained committed to the idea of transferring its responsibility for the Protectorate, it promulgated two important Orders-in-Council. The first, issued in June of 1890, vested the Crown

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134. Parliament of the Cape of Good Hope *Report of the Select Committee on the Jameson Raid* (W.A. Richards & Sons, Government Printers 1896) p. 33, testimony of J.A. Steven, June 4, 1896. Maylam, pp. 223-24 "A note on the Secheleland Syndicate."

135. Another irony is that while Kruger and Lobengula abetted their downfalls through their relations with Lippert, Sebele and his successors, until 1934, continued to collect a reduced royalty, L 405, on the otherwise inoperable Secheleland Conscession.

136. PRO 879/32/392 Loch to Knutesford, June 17, 1890, in which was expressed the concern that if BSAC control were allowed "the administrative body of the Protectorate would be the advisors as to the validity or otherwise of concessions granted to concessionaires in which the British South Africa Chartered Company themselves are interested."

with the power to: "provide for giving effect to any power or jurisdiction which Her Majesty, her heirs or successors, may at any time before or after the date of this order have within the limits of this order."[137] These limits now defined so that all of contemporary Botswana was incorporated into the Protectorate. Otherwise the powers of the administration under the Order remained vague. To address this nebulosity another Order was gazetted in May 1891, which specifically empowered the High Commissioner to legislate for: "the administration of justice, the raising of revenue, and generally for the peace, order and good government of all persons within the limits of this Order, including the prohibition of acts tending to disturb the public peace." This second Order was based on a memorandum drafted by the then Undersecretary of State for the Colonies, John Bramstone, which broadly interpreted the Crown's responsibility to protect "white men," including it was now established non-British subjects, as a pretext for limiting the sovereignty of the diKgosi.[138]

In October 1891, the British used their self-bestowed authority to impose a set of licence fees on commercial activities in the Protectorate.[139] Sebele questioned this usurpation but was told that he had no say in the matter. Despite this rebuke, he forbade his traders from paying. It soon became apparent, however, that while the Kgosi and Kgotla continued to reject Britain's right to collect fees from anyone

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137. (BNA BNB 979) M. Williams (edit.) *Bechuanaland Protectorate Orders in Council and High Commissioner's Proclamations and Notices, 1891-1914*, (J.C. Juta, Cape Town 1915.)

138. PRO CO 879/34/410: "Memorandum as to the Jurisdiction and Administrative Powers of a European State holding Protectorates in Africa," Feb. 1891.

139. The following is detailed HC 114/1 (also PRO CO 879/36/426 no. 71) Shippard to Loch, Feb. 22; enclosing Surmon to Shippard, Feb. 18, and Testimony collected during enquiry held at Molepolole, Feb. 16, 1892 as well as related BBP reports.

they were prepared to enforce a ban on such payments with regards to Asian and Boer traders only. In so doing they acted on the supposition that members of these two groups were not "white people" subject to the Queen's law in accordance with their "treaty" with Warren. In February, William Surmon, who had been installed as Assistant Commissioner at the newly established Fort Gaberones "with the view of keeping in check the somewhat turbulent Chiefs, Lenchwe and Sebele,"[140] was informed that the MoKwena had ordered the reopening of a Asian shop, which had been closed for non-payment. At the same time it was also reported that a party of BaKwena had forcibly prevented a detachment of BBP from collecting the fees of a Boer smouse. The failure of another Boer to obtain a licence further drew attention to the jurisdictional claims of the Secheleland Syndicate as well as BaKwena court.[141]

In response to all of the above, the Assistant Commissioner embarked for Molepolole to conduct an enquiry. Sebele and the rest of the BaKwena refused to cooperate. Instead they held their own *letsholo* during which it was agreed to remain steadfast but not to resort to armed violence.[142] The peaceful nature of the *morafe's* stand was not immediately appreciated by their presumptive overlords. Tensions rose as alarmed reports of BagaKgafela and BaTlokwa

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140. PRO CO 879/37/441 Loch to Colonial Office, Nov. 17, 1892.

141. It was alleged that Alloway had already collected L 5 on behalf of the Syndicate from B.I. Vickerman for the sole right to trade at the then new settlement at Gabane- BNA HC 114/1 Surmon to Shippard, Feb. 18, 1892; also Ellenberger Diary (copy in Botswana Collection U.B. Library) entry Feb. 11, 1892.

142. BNA HC 114/1 Wright to Grey (BBP), Feb. 22, 1892, enclosing police telegrams. It was at this time that Sebele is first said to have raised the idea of taking his grievances to London.

support for the BaKwena, as well as an assault on the BBP by the BagaKmanaana, were received.[143] Shippard, observing "that this case is regarded by other Chiefs, and natives generally in the Southern Protectorate, as a test" recommended "immediate preparations for coercive measures" including a promise of assistance from Khama in the event of military action directed against the southern diKgosi.

Shippard's hopes for a crisis were soon frustrated by both Surmon and Sebele. The former was authorized, over the Deputy Commissioner's objections, to return to Molepolole accompanied by only two men. On his arrival, he imposed a token fine of ten oxen.[144] Sebele, protesting what was in fact an extra-legal maneuver on Surmon's part, decided to back down by turning over the cattle as a sign of his "friendship".[145] Despite this submission Sebele and the other diKgosi ultimately benefited from the confrontation for although he stopped interfering with fee collecting by the British he, along with his southern partners, continued to demand their own payments from traders. When his rights in this respect were challenged, the then Secretary of State, Marquess of Ripon, cited "the difficulty which took place in 1892, when very heavy expense was incurred in enforcing the right of the protecting power to collect an insignificant amount of

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143. BNA HC 114/1 Wright to Grey, Feb. 22, 1892; Surmon to Loch, March 3, 1892. Ellenberger Diary, entry for Feb. 5, 1892, which indicates that the alleged assault at Mosopa was minor incident.

144. BNA HC 114/1 Shippard to Loch, March 2, and Loch to Shippard March 5, 1892.

145. BNA HC 114/1 Shipperd to Loch, March 6, 1892, forwarded Loch to Knutesford, March 19, 1892, enclosing Sebele's statement: "I do not like to be taught how to rule my own people. If I am taught according to other peoples ideas I will only make mistakes. My ancestors kept their villages in good order without acting under the compulsion of others. Friendship does not mean giving laws to another. Friendship is to advise each other."

revenue" in suggesting that the diKgosi might be allowed to impose "reasonable taxation."[146] In another, more immediate, development in the wake of the confrontation Sebele requested an audience with Loch in Cape Town.[147] The High Commissioner was receptive:

> "In view of the difficulty which had recently occurred at Molepolole I considered it desirable that his request should be complied with so that he might have the opportunity of realizing the differences between European and Native civilization and that the power of the former might impress upon him to such an extent as would probably obviate the chance of his again acting in a manner likely to endanger the peace of the Protectorate."[148]

During his stay in Cape Town Sebele was thus given a thorough tour of the local military installations. Such efforts were probably misplaced since the MoKwena already had a healthy appreciation of the Empire's arms dating back at least as far as the defeats of various African groups during the late 1870's. As it was Sebele was reportedly relieved at the manner in which he was received for he had believed that by coming to the Cape he had exposed himself to the risk of imprisonment.[149] The conversation at Government House was cordial enough.[150] Loch ascertained that Sebele was enjoying his stay and encouraged him not to miss the fleet at Simonstown. For his part the Kgosi protested the circumstances of his fine but accepted the High Commissioner's assertion

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146. BNA 140/1 (also PRO CO 879/42/484) Ripon to Loch, Jan. 10, 1894. The rights of diKgosi to collect "stand rents" was thereafter accepted though after much debate it was decided that the diKgosi should only be able to accept "gifts" from traveling hawkers: Ripon to Loch, June 15, 1894.

147. BNA HC 114/2 Sebele to Loch via Surmon, May 23, 1892.

148. BNA HC 114/2 (also PRO CO 879/36/426) Loch to Knutesford, June 14, 1892.

149. BNA HC 114/2 Loch to Knutesford, June 14, 1892.

150. BNA HC 114/2 & 3 (two copies) High Commissioner's interview w/ Sebele (accompanied by Kebohula, Motsatsi, Gaealashwe and Rev. Williams), June 9, 1892.

that "all Europeans whether English or Dutch are under me." Loch came away from the meeting convinced Sebele would "behave better in future." The Kgosi also had reason to feel reassured for the High Commissioner, following London's explicit instructions in the aftermath the recent crisis, had been careful to couch his authority in terms of regulating Europeans. But all pretence that the BaTswana would at least be allowed internal sovereignty was soon compromised by the colonial state's intervention in the internal affairs of Kweneng through the BaKaa crisis.

In September of 1892 Sechele and Kgosi Mosinyi II of the BaKaa died within a week of one another. It is said that the great Mokwena's passing was accompanied by many foreboding signs.[151] A certain Rangwedi, for instance, prophesied that the BaKwena would never find Sechele's successor. Songs of doom were also sung. One of these, "Diremogolo," spoke of a white man who shouted at the land and would steal its *bogosi*. Another, "Rasekete," augered of impending internal divisions; its chorus telling of a Kgosi who dies in the prosperous possession of fine black and white cattle that then grew gray and developed dangerous horns. As news of the death spread the women invaded the Kgotla crying: "Our king is dead, where shall we flee." The men then gathered as a *Pitso ya lebya* and, under Kgosidintsi's guidance, sanctioned Sebele's ascession.[152]

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151. Following based on WCW/SO 739, Kgabo aTeble M.S., pp. 12, 18 (prophecy and songs) & and notes by Willougby; BNA PP 1/1/10 Kwadira Lesele; Knoble, pp. 61-63; also *Chronicle* "Death of two African Chiefs"; BNA HC 114/3 Moffat to Loch, Oct. 6, 1892; and HC 116 (also PRO CO 879/42/484 no. 60) Loch to Ripon, Nov. 13, 1894, enclosing papers related to Kgari vs. Sebele.

152. According to Willoughby/Kgabo the *lebya* was a stone or clay mortor in which were fired medicines with which the heir was doctored and which he, in turn, used to doctor his brothers based on their putative ranking. Other medicines were boiled in large clay pots and sprayed on all in attendance by a *ngaka* using an animal tail wisk.

Sechele's sons along with the rest of the *Pitso* accepted their medicine, some with a notable lack of enthusiasm:

> "Noxious herb that inflames the bowels,
> medicine thats bitter when eaten,
> the buffalo-thorn is bitter, Rapholotshega;
> now, having grown, its even worse,
> if eaten by someone it can injure the mouth;
> but we just take it, having dug it up;
> other kinds of medicine are finished."[153]

Although the Sechele's burial as well as the distribution of royal cattle gave rise to disputes among his sons, most notably between Sebele and Kgari, in his immediate wake the BaKwena maintained an outwardly united front. In contrast their junior allies, the BaKaa, were hopelessly divided.

With the death of Mosinyi II a dispute arose among the BaKaa over the conflicting claims to *bogosi* of his three sons: Selalabyannye, Segotso, and Tshwene. The genealogy behind their claims is as follows.[154] Mosinyi had had at least three wives: Mmadia the mother of Selalabannye, Tsetsa the mother of Segotso, and Gabafe the mother of Tshwene. Mmadia had been married as Mohumagadi a mogolo during the reign of Mosinyi's father Suwe but had been cast off. Subsequently she had a son

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153. Schapera *Praise Poems* p. 139. Also in W.A. Norton "Sesuto and Sechuana Praises" *Translations of Royal African Society of South Africa* vol. 10, 1922 pp. 253-66, p. 265. Litseababa, interviewed Aug. 19, 1985, dictated a *leboka* of Sebele which, while overlapping with the full texts in Schapera and Norton, lacks such negative references. A similar version also in in M.O.M. Seboni *Rammone wa Kgalagadi* (Van Schaik, Pretoria 1947) p. 17, which, according to Schapera is same Leseyane *Buka ya go Buisa* (for Standard 5-6) (Van Schaik, 1941) pp. 100-1.

154. Based on: BNA HC 114/3 "Notes of Enquiry held by Mr. Surmon at Molepolole on 27, 28, 29th July 1893. Interviews with Pela Rabana and Tlale at Shoshong, Jan. 17, 1986. BNA PP 1/2/6 & 1/3/2 (extensive interviews and M.S. on BaKaa history collected by Isaac Schapera including Tshwene's M.S. "Mahoko a Bakaa," Dec. 4, 1892). I. Schapera "Notes on the History of the Kaa" *African Studies* vol. 4, no. 3 (Sept. 1945), pp. 109-121.

with Rraantsolobela, Kgosana of the BaPhaleng. Mosinyi is said to have claimed this child who, nonetheless, died in the Mophaleng's household. Thereafter the Mohumagadi was remarried to a MoKwena commoner named Molefi with whom she bore Selalabyanne.[155] The evidence supports the contention that Molefi's senior, Mmupi, thereafter agreed to place Selalabyanne in Mosinyi's custody. Sechele is further said to have confirmed this decision and ordered that the bogadi paid by the natural father be refunded.[156] To complicate matters further Gabafe, whom Mosinyi reportedly favored, although married after Tsetsa was originally placed in the house of Mmadia prior to the latter's bearing of her sons. Selalabyannye, incidentally, was born well after his two brothers and was only an adolescent at the time of their father's death.

Another factor that shaped the crisis was Tshwene's relationship with Sebele and Khama. As noted in the previous chapter, after he had supported his sister, Gagoangwe's desertion of Pilane for Bathoen, Sebele had reconciled with the BagaMmanaana royalty by giving his daughter Kudubane, then already Tshwene's wife, to Pilane's heir Baitirile. Tshwene objected to this procedure and went to Gammangwato where he was re-married to Khama's daughter Pidio. At the time Khama was preparing to abandon his capital at Shoshong, in what had formerly been the BaKaa hills, for Palapye and

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155. Like Sechele and Sebele, Selalabyanne's name (which was given by Molefi's family) is IKalanga. It is said to have been either the name of a traditional doctor or that of a She (IKalanga community head) with whom Molefi had been hunting up north. She Selalabyanne is said to have hosted and assisted the MaGanelwa regiment in hunting elephants during one of Sechele's expeditions to the AmaNdebele: BNA PP 1/1/10 Kayamore & Gokatweng. Also HC 114/3 Notes of Enquiry- testimony of Bathoen I.

156. BNA PP 1/1/10 Kayamore & Gokatweng. Countering this is the claim that Selalabannye later asked to return to Molifi's household: HC 114/3 Notes of Enquiry- testimony of Mhiko.

allegedly arranged with his son-in-law that he should bring his people back to their former abode.[157]

By September of 1892, a power struggle had emerged between Segotso, the eldest son, and Tshwene who at the time was content to champion Selalabannye's seniority. In an attempt to pre-empt his rival Tshwene arranged to have most of his father's cattle removed to the Ngotwane near the modern village of Bokaa in Kgatleng. This action drew the Mokwena into the conflict. While it is possible that Sebele predisposed in favor of Segotso he, nonetheless, took care in practicing proper procedure. Tshwene was warned on two occasions to return the cattle pending a settlement. Sebele further promised not to stand in the way of the BaKaa factions if they chose to separate. Only after these overtures were rejected did the Paramount Kgosi allow Segotso to recapture most of the herd. Sebele then summoned a general *Pitso* to assist him in his adjudication. By the time he had rendered his judgement in Segotso's favor he enjoyed the support of not only of the Kgotla but the followers of Bathoen, Baitirile, Gaborone, Kgari Macheng, and Thobega (BaHuruthse.)[158] Tshwene then retreated with a considerable following, including Selalabannye, to take refuge in the Kgatleng.

This might have been the end of the affair. As it was Tshwene appealed to Khama who, in March 1893, turned to the British. Surmon then recommended that Khama, himself, be authorized to make a settlement.[159] Loch rejected this and

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157. BNA PP 1/1/10 Gokatweng, Basutli, Phutegelo, and Kalayamore

158. BNA HC 114/3 Notes of Enquiry- testimony of Tsima and Bathoen I.

159. BNA HC 114/3 Surmon to Imperial Secretary, April 9, 1893.

ordered Surmon to assume the responsibility, though Khama's secretary, Ratshosa, was thereafter deputed to assist him:[160]

> "Surmon should hold an enquiry and give an award. Should the award be adverse to Sebele and should Sebele refuse to oblige it then Khama might be told that he can take his remedy and that he will receive the moral support of the police."[161]

The enquiry was held at Molepolole between in late July 1893. It drew "about 1,000 Native men chiefly BaKwena" but also "Chief Bathoen and councillors" as well as others from throughout the Protectorate.[162] During the meeting the BaKwena speakers, with the support of the delegates from Kanye and other neighboring communities, denounced the British intervention into their internal affairs. Noted one MoNgwaketse speaker: "It seems hard to us that the decision given by one Chief is not final, the protection will be hard on us if such is the case."[163] Tshwene and his backers had their say but found little favor among the other BaTswana present, with the exception of Ratshosa, whose own contribution to the proceedings was confined to indulging in insults against his BaKwena hosts. In response Segale Pilane, representing the BagaKgafela, abandoned Linchwe's instructions that he act as a silent observer by speaking out against the MoNgwato's provocations as well as for the principal of imperial non-intervention.

It was Sebele's position that all of the royal cattle and property of the BaKaa should be brought together so that he could exercise his responsibility by making a public division. But Surmon maintained that Tshwene's claims were just but that each party should return those cattle in its possession which

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160. BNA HC 114/3 Loch to Surmon, April 13, 1893; Surmon to Loch, June 22, 1893.
161. BNA HC 114/3 Loch to Shippard, May 13, 1893.
162. BNA HC 114/3 Notes of Enquiry.
163. BNA HC 114/3 Notes of Enquiry- testimony of Tsima.

belonged to the other. In so ruling the Assistant Commissioner showed little concern for the ambiguities raised by various claims and counterclaims and indeed, beyond stating his arbitrary acceptance of Tshwene's claims, did not even attempt to justify his conclusion.

Several months went by during which neither the BaKwena nor anyone else seems to have had a clear idea as to how to carry out Surmon's award. The Protectorate administration then decided that each side should simply hand over the cattle claimed by the other, a method most favorable to Tshwene who had presented the largest claim. Sebele reluctantly countered that all of the disputed cattle be brought together and divided with Surmon, rather than himself, now serving as final arbiter.[164] This compromise was agreed to in principal but its implementation was postponed by the outbreak of the first Anglo-AmaNdebele war, an event that was locally accompanied by a series of skirmishes along the still disputed Gamangwato-Kweneng border (during which the British gave their full backing to the BaNgwato.)[165] It was not until January 1894 that the first abortive attempt was made to bring the cattle together. The following week Sebele's senior son, Kealeboga, handed over 196 cattle to Tshwene who held out for

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164. BNA HC 114/3 Sebele to Loch, Oct. 1, 1893.

165. Clashes occurred at Tsitle in September and Menoke in November of 1893, the latter resulting in a couple of casualties. At the official enquiry into the former incident the BaKwena sent a three man delegation as instructed while Khama came with 2,000 armed followers: BNA AC 2/1/6, 2/2/3, 2/2/8. The BaNgwato-BaKwena boundary was fully demarcated by the "Lokgalo Commission": PRO CO 879/42/484 Loch to Ripon Dec. 26, 1894 (in addition to the official papers in BNA and PRO considerable material on the dispute can be found in WCW/SO 735 "Lokgalo Boundary Commission".)

533.[166] At this point Surmon arbitrarily decided that Tshwene was due another 200 head.

It is clear from the official B.P. correspondence that in February of 1894 Shippard, along with the BBP Major Grey, was eager to provoke a fullscale war between the British and the southern BaTswana by launching a punitive expedition against Molepolole. As a contingency Surmon had proposed a joint BBP-BaNgwato operation should Sebele refuse to handover the cattle.[167] Although Sebele soon agreed to submit to Surmon's decision the then ongoing war preparations very nearly overwhelmed this desperate gesture.[168] Moffat then reported from Palapye that the BagaKgafela and BaNgwaketse were prepared to come to the aid of the BaKwena.[169] Although Shippard doubted the accuracy of Moffat's information he, nonetheless, endorsed the concept of enticing the BaRolong booRatshidi and BaLete, in return for territorial concessions from the BaNgwaketse, as well as BaNgwato into siding with the British.[170] But it was the Deputy Commissioner's hope that the BBP alone would suffice in implementing his proposal to depose Sebele and burn Molepolole as the "moral effect of entrusting the operation entirely to white troops would be greater on the natives."[171] The expedition would have been financed through the seizure of BaKwena cattle.[172] As it was Sebele's delivery of the cattle came just in time to satisfy Loch and frustrate Shippard.[173]

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166. BNA HC 114/3 Surmon to Newton, Jan. 18, 1893. Tshwene had returned 106 cattle to Segotswe: Shippard to Loch, Jan. 11, 1893

167. BNA HC 114/3 Surmon to Newton, Jan. 18, 1894.

168. BNA HC 114/3 Shippard to Loch, February 12, 1894.

169. BNA HC 114/3 Loch to Shippard, Feb. 25, 1894.

170. BNA HC 114/3 Shippard to Loch, Feb. 26, 1894.

171. BNA HC 114/3 Shippard to Loch, Feb. 27, 1894. Loch agreed: Loch to Shippard, Feb. 28, 1894.

172. BNA HC 114/3 Shippard to Loch, Feb. 8, 1894; Loch to Shippard, Feb. 8, 1894.

Although the settlement of the BaKaa crisis was immediately followed by Khama's promotion of another baseless charge that Sebele and Linchwe, along with their junior allies, where preparing to join the AmaNdebele in a new uprising, relations between the BaKwena and their imperial overlords remained relatively free of crisis for the remainder of 1894.[174] This state of affairs can be attributed, in part, to the conflict that had by then broken out between Sebele and his brother Kgari who, in the aftermath of the BaKaa settlement, attempted to set himself up as an autonomous ruler within Kweneng. While the roots of this sibling contest can be traced back to questions arising at the time of their separate mother's betrothals, a number of contemporaneous issues helped to define their followings.[175]

Up until then, Sebele's record as a leader, from his cowardice at the battle of Mochudi through his repeated loss of face before the British, had been seemingly made up of a series of setbacks that, when combined with his penchant for arbitrary and occasionally severe methods, encouraged opposition. An example of the Kgosi's harshness was his order that a number of corn fields be burned when their owners failed to assist him in collecting the cattle that had been demanded by Surmon.[176] This incident suggests that some

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173. BNA HC 117 Surmon to Loch via Shippard, March 1, 1894 reporting 228 mixed cattle given to Tshwene, and Loch to Ripon, March 2, 1894. Shippard had sought to make an issue out of a earlier report that only 165 had been delivered: HC 114/3 Shippard to Loch, Feb. 28, 1894.

174. Rumored uprising- BNA AC 2/1/2 Ratshosa to J. Ellenburger, April 23, 1894. PRO CO 879/42/484 Cameron to Ripon, May 2, 1894 w/enclosures. LMS Howard Williams, Aug. 6, 1894.

175. Kgari's mother, Mokgokong, was married to Sechele prior to MmaSebele but not as the community sanctioned "great wife," see chapter 1.

176. BNA HC 118 (also PRO CO 879/42/484 annexure "C") evidence collected at Molepolole, Sept. 11, 1894. Also BNA PP 1/1/10 Gokatweng & Basutli.

BaKwena were by then already spending much of their time at their lands, that is away from the responsibilities at Kgosing. Whether this phenomenon indeed represented a specific desire to escape from Sebele or a more general trend towards scattered agricultural settlement, fueled by internal peace and the rapid spread of the plow, remains an open question.

There can be little doubt, though, that the Kgosi's use of such strongarm tactics had been both unpopular and a demonstration of weakness.[177] His ill-advised dealings with Nicholls and Reisle had, furthermore, left him vulnerable to the accusation that he was selling the country to the *Makgoa*. Divisions over *bogwera* also had an influence. While Sebele by championing the institution bolstered his own support he, by the same token, invited the uninitiated Kgari to, in the words of the missionary Lloyd, "attempt to play the Christian card" through his objection to the formation of a new *mophato* during the period of mourning for Sechele.[178] Within the royal family Sebele's alleged selfishness in dividing his late father's cattle drove his younger brothers, Motsatsi and Motswasele, into an alliance with Kgari.[179] Another prominent backer of Kgari was Segotso, who is said to have begrudged Sebele for his loss of so many of his own father's cattle to Tshwene.[180] But probably the most important issue which served to undermine support for the Kgosi among members of the local

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177. According to S.G. Masimega, interviewed Sept. 10, 1985, Sebele subsequently made it his policy to actually encourage the BaKwena to expand into the countryside.

178. Lloyd, p. 262. BNA PP 1/1/10 Phuthegelo. Despite his "poor opinion" of Sebele the local missionary, Howard Williams, however advised Shippard to uphold "the lawful chief's authority": LMS Williams to Thompson, Sept. 15, 1894, enclosing Williams to Shippard, Sept. 14, 1894.

179. BNA HC 118 Evidence, collected at Molepolole, Sept. 11, 1894, of Motsatsi, Motwasele, and Seele. According to Gokatweng & Basutli, in PP 1/1/10, Sebele quarrelled with all of his brothers who "did not like him because he was very fierce."

180. Schapera "Notes on History of Kaa," p. 118.

elite was his attempt to end their tributory rights over their BaKgalagadi clients. As the following passage makes clear, in pushing this policy Sebele was not motivated by any progressive desire to "free the serfs":[181]

> "With regard to the Bakalahari, I have not only prevented Khari's Bakalahari from bringing skins, but have told all Bakwena the same thing. During Sechele's life, Sechele, I and Khari and all those who were considered headmen had the right to go to the desert and to demand skins from the Bakalahari, but I, Sebele, have put a stop to this. I told the Bakwena that I was Chief and I wished all the skins to be brought to me. It is not only to Khari that I said that he was not to receive skins from the Bakalahari, I have said so to all headmen. I told all Bakwena and Khosilintse also that there is only one Chief among the Bakwena, that I am that Chief and that tribute is to be paid to me alone. This is all with regard to the Bakalahari."[182]

By August of 1894 Kgari had begun to hold court for his growing following at Mogonono, near the wells of Gamashadi about twenty-five kilometers north of Molepolole; on account of which his supporters became known as the "BagaMashadi."[183] He hoped that the British would not only recognize his de facto independence from his brother's authority but, perhaps more importantly, that they would allow "that the Bakwena territory should be divided by a line running North to South, leaving Sebele Chief of the Bakwena living east of that line and making Khari Chief of those on the west."[184] The British

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181. Alfred Bertrand, *Au Pays des Ba-Rotsi, Haut-Zambeze*, (Librairie Hachette, Paris 1898), p. 30: (writing of the *malata* herders in the region) *"ces derniers rappellent les serfs russes de l'ancien regime."*

182. BNA HC 118 Evidence collected at Molepolole, Sept. 11, 1894- Sebele.

183. PRO CO 879/42/484 Statement of Jacoba Kgari to J. Ellenburger, Aug. 28, 1894. BNA PP 1/1/10 Phutegelo, Kwadira Lesele. Bertrand, pp 32-33, contains a description of the BagaMashadi settlement, which he calls "Klippan."

184. PRO CO 879/42/484 Annexure "G" award by commission under Shippard, Oct. 24, 1894.

were not slow in appreciating the implications of this: "Khari gives as his reason for refusing to go to Kolobeng that the ground there is insufficient for gardens for himself and his followers, but I believe the real reason for his not wishing to go there is that if he does Sebele would be between him and the Kalahari, and would, therefore, be in a better position than he to obtain possession of the tribute brought in by the Bakalahari, and that he and his people would consequently lose most, if not all, of the tribute from them."[185]

Kgari enjoyed a considerable following. According to Surmon, by February 1895, the sibling rivals commanded the loyalty of roughly equal but socially differentiated factions: "More of the Bakwena proper seem to have remained with Sebele than have gone with Khari, but more subordinate tribes, who from time to time joined the Bakwena, have followed Kgari."[186]

The above assessment probably inflates the ranks of the BagaMashadi by incorporating the large *meratswane* communities of eastern Kweneng, that is those at Tlokweng, Gabane, and MmaNkgodi, which, despite their leader's wariness of Sebele, appear to have been prudently neutral.[187] On the other hand it is clear that the dissidents included within their ranks many, if not most, of the junior kgotla of the *baagedi*.[188] In contrast, Sebele enjoyed the support of the heads of the autonomous *metse* at Molepolole, in particular the Mokgalo ward

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185. PRO CO 879/42/484 Surmon to Newton, Feb. 13, 1895.
186. PRO CO 879/42/484 Surmon to Newton, Feb. 13, 1895.
187. Interviews with Kobedi Seribe, Aug. 5, 1985 at MmaNkgodi; Kgosi Letlole, Aug. 12, 1985 at Thamaga; Acting Kgosi Kobune, Monte Mokgosi, and Tshibidu Mosakwane at Gabane, Sept. 2, 1985.
188. Mhiko who inheirited his father Segakisa's position as the royal *mogotsa-molelo* backed Sebele, however, despite the latter's long running affair with his wife Bautlwe.

under Kgosidintsi and the booRaTshosa ward under Gaashugelwa.[189] An additional factor, which may explain why much of Kgosing defected to the BagaMashadi while the metse remained loyal to the Kgosi, was that the kgotla of the Sons of Kgabo, who had originally sanctioned MmaSebele's promotion as Mohumagadi, were simply reluctant to alter the line of succession. As Lloyd observed of the situation: "The law of primogenture is firmly fixed in the minds of the Bechuana, and they will not break it without a very good reason."[190]

Perhaps more significant than its cause was the political effect of this dichotomy. The Kgari-Sebele dispute was, if not the product of, at the very least the context for, the emergence of colonial era competition between what the colonial authorities labelled as the "Chief," the "leading headmen," and the "commoners" of the "tribe." According to Ratlou Ketshabile under Sebele the diKgosana of Mokgalo, RaTshosa, Maunatlala, and Ntloedibe, that is the principal Sons of Kgabo, were able to enhance their own status as such leading headmen at the direct expense of infuential commoners, *Basimane ba Kgosi*.[191] In addition to maintaining their autonomy in other matters the heads of the four *metse* were able to reassert their tributary rights over their clients.[192] As a result, whereas the government of Sechele was said to have been "like a democracy" in that the common folks, that is

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189. BNA PP 1/1/10 Phutegelo (on the booRaTshosa): "they had once killed the chief (i.e. Motswasele II) and left the tribe and did not want to do so again."

190. Lloyd, p. 62. BNA PP 1/1/10, Phutegelo, who stresses that most of the kgotla backed Sebele despite a strong personal preference for Kgari due to constitutional concerns, this was clearly true in the case of Kgosidintsi.

191. Interview w/ Ratlou Ketshabile, Oct. 8, 1985.

192. This is especially drawn out in the historical texts collected by Gaontatlhe Mautle for his study "Bakgalagadi-Bakwena relationship: A case of slavery, c. 1840-c. 1930" deposited at the Botswana Collection of the U.B. Library.

baagedi, were consulted, affairs under the first Sebele were to a greater degree dominated by the "true crocodiles."[193] While the extent of nineteenth-century SeKwena democracy is debatable, what is certain is that Sebele's dependency on "the four corners" ultimately compromised his own prerogatives as a ruler, as well as those of the junior kgotla grouped directly under him at Kgosing.

After Kgari died, at the close of 1895, most of the BagaMashadi had begun to drift back to Sebele. Prior to this turn of events the division had the inevitable result of increasing the *morafe's* vulnerability to colonialist inroads in the context of the continued BSAC threat. With Kgari appealing for British protection, Sebele chose to humble himself before Shippard: "As for me let me be as Khama amongst you, and I desire to do as he, but my people let them be mine, (tho') I be among you."[194] In October the Deputy Commissioner used the split to assert his own paramount authority by ruling that the BagaMashadi must remove themselves to Kolobeng.[195] Although this decision provisionally gave Sebele the advantage of continued control over access to the Kgalagadi, it also had the immediate, possibly intended, effect of promoting further infighting between the two factions.

The turn of events was a personal setback for Kgari, who might have expected a more forthcoming response from both the British and his maternal relations in Gammangwato. His bid for power came too late for, with the accelerated movement in favor of the Protectorate's transfer to the BSAC, external enthusiasm for the overthrow of his now weakened brother had

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193. Ratlou's grandfather(?), Ketshabile, had been one of Sechele I's principal "commoner" councillors.

194. PRO CO 879/42/484 Sebele to Shippard (n.d. c.Sept. 1894.) Also Kgari to Loch, August 24, 1894.

195. PRO 879/42/484 Award of Shippard in "Khari, son of Sechele vs. Sebele, Chief of Bakwens." Oct. 24, 1894.

waned. In some quarters *bogosi* itself appeared on its way out. In the words of Wardlaw Thompson, then Foreign Secretary of the L.M.S.:

> "It is a very sad state of things, and cannot fail injuriously to affect all public work among the people. I suppose it is but one of the steps towards the inevitable breakup of the powers of the chiefs. There will be no real prosperity in the land now that the white man has come until the tribal rule has come to an end, and all the the people are directly under British rule, and free to move about as the will within the limits of their country."[196]

By 1894 it was becoming apparent to all of the diKgosi, including a by now anxious Khama, that the Chartered Company, with its position in Rhodesia seemingly secure and various concessionary roadblocks largely overcome, was at last ready to assume formal control over the Protectorate. The timing of this development was hardly propitious from a BaTswana standpoint. The BaNgwato as well as the BaKwena were beset by serious internal divisions.[197] In addition, the influence of MacKenzie and other advocates of direct imperial control over Bechuanaland had faded. Rhodes, now the Prime Minister of the Cape Colony as well as the master of the Rhodesia, was at the height of his power. For him, the formal acquisition of the Protectorate was a necessary stepping stone to the realization of his greater ambition- to achieve sub-continental hegemony through the armed seizure of the SAR. The resulting debacle of

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196. LMS Out Correspondence, Thompson to H. Williams (at Molepolole), Dec. 22, 1894.

197. In 1895 Khama was challenged by a dissident faction led by his three brothers, Rraditladi, Mphoeng, and Seeletso, and the dikgosana Kuate and Tiro. This followed an earlier break, in 1891, led by two other brothers, Mokhutshwane and Ikitseng, and a brother-in-law, Sephekolo, and came in the context of the long-term challenges of Khamane and Kgari Macheng as well as old guard supporters of his late father Sekgoma. As with the BagaMashadi initially strong support for the "Rraditladi party" had by the end of 1895 been greatly diminished.

the infamous Jameson Raid led to the sudden eclipse of BSAC's political presence within the Protectorate at the very moment of its consolidation. By this twist of fate, Bathoen, Khama, and Sebele returned from their brilliantly executed, but marginally rewarded, mission to the Queen to find themselves soon hailed as popular saviors.

In June 1895 Surmon reported to his superiors that a certain Towshend of the *Bechuanaland News* had sent letters to the major diKgosi confirming their by now well established fears about the imminent transfer of their territories to the BSAC.[198] It is possible that this communication, along with the then ongoing move to annex British Bechuanaland to the Cape Colony, played a decisive role in pushing Bathoen, Khama, and Sebele into their decision to take their case to the British public.[199] At any rate by the end of July the three had forwarded their initial petitions for continued imperial rule and, with the aid of their missionaries, were busy coordinating departure plans.[200] The BaKwena petition, which was proceeded by that of the BaNgwato, was notable for its emphasis on land rights: "We do not wish to be protected simply from those who would make war on us, but from those who would divide up our country into allotments."[201]

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198. BNA HC 196/1 Surmon to Shippard, June 24, 1895.

199. Bathoen like Sebele had earlier expressed an interest in going to the U.K. in the wake of Loch's Orders-in-Council while Khama had already been invited to take part in the centenary celebrations of the L.M.S.

200. LMS "Willoughby Papers"- telegram Williams (Molepolole) to Willoughby (Palapye), July 29, 1895 "Sebele and Bathoen prepared to go to England with Khama..." (file includes followup telegrams.)

201. BNA HC 196/1 (also PRO CO 879/44/498) "Petition of Bakwena Chief and Tribe to Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, Secretary for Colonies" signed by Sebele and 45 others, July 17, and Petition by Khama and 128 others, June 28, 1895. Also Bathoen, July 31st and the "Kgatla Raad" (BagaKgafela) July 27, 1895.

Major aspects of the diKgosi's 1895 mission to the U.K. been previously examined and thus need only be outlined.[202] Two points, however, call for additional emphasis. One is the fundamental importance of Bathoen, Khama, and Sebele's steadfast determination to consistently "speak as one mouth" given their past history of strained relations.[203] A second point is that Joseph Chamberlain's famous November award was to have been little more than a ruse. In this respect historians have echoed Rhodes' initial, generally incorrect, assumption that: "A large country as big as the British Isles will now be definitely beaconed and dedicated to these people."[204]

Although its success was, in fact, almost entirely the retroactive product of the Raid, the embassy of the "Three Top-hatted Chiefs" to "Mma mosadinyana," fully deserves its place as a crucial event in the annals of Botswana.[205] While it did not, as popular legend would have it, result in the establishment of "Mmamosadinyana's protection" it did serve as a popular justification of colonial presence that, in turn, facilated the peaceful introduction of the Hut Tax and other impositions. Also Khama's conversion from an adversary to an ally of his fellow diKgosi was both a substantive and symbolic opening in the emergence of wider sense of common ground among the *merafe*. The ruler's success in reaching out to public opinion in the U.K., furthermore, gave them and their

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202. Notably in Maylam, Neil Parsons unpublished MA and Phd. thesis, and Sillery *Founding a Protectorate*, pp. 212-34 (chapter 18- "Visit of Chiefs to England".)

203. PRO CO 879/44/498 Khama, Sebele, Bathoen to CO, Sept. 24, 1895: "But the words that brought us to England are one, and we speak them as one mouth."

204. Rhodes to Duke of Fife, Dec. 1895, cited by Maylam, 168.

205. "Mma mosadiyane" or the "little woman," ie Victoria. Julian Mockford, p. 129, Sebele: "Her Majesty is a very charming old lady. She has a round, beautiful face and a very sweet voice. But I had no idea that she was so small."

heirs a basis with which they could maintain the often convenient illusion that they enjoyed a special relationship with the Sovereign and subjects of the metropole.[206]

The Batswana monarchs were hardly the first Africans to travel to London. What sets their mission apart was their, for the time extraordinary, ability to cultivate the support of a influential segment of the British public. As Neil Parsons has pointed out, their whirlwind tour was something of an archetype in political public relations: "The delegates' campaign combined rapid nationwide rail travel, as developed by Gladstone and Chamberlain, with the use of a national network of Christian or 'humanitarian' platforms and chambers of commerce, as pioneered by the anti-slavery lobbies."[207] From September to November of 1895 they appeared at engagements across the length and breadth of the U.K. where they were particularly well received in non-conformist, temperence, and "radical imperialist" circles.[208] In this respect the rulers benefited from the coincidence of their visit with the centenary celebrations of the L.M.S., a concurrence which provided a focus for the emergence of "humanitarian" sentiments among the island's middle class. And so seeds of goodwill that had been planted by Sechele and nurtured by Khama began to bear fruit. The *Sunday Times* wrote of their crusade's progress: "The missionary feeling in England is immensely strong, its tendency to grow and no British Ministry

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206. An illustration of the actual limits of their imperial status can be found in the failure of Bathoen I and Khama to be vested with the CMG which Willoughby justified, in contrast to Indian Rajs so honoured, to their "different surroundings"- WCW/SO 778.

207. Parsons "The 'Image' of Khama the Great," p. 41.

208. WCW/SO 54 includes Willougby's records of their itinerary and expenses. Appearances were made in forty different towns and cities.

can ignore its political influence."[209] The publication of J.D. Hepburn's *Twenty Years in Khama's Country*, which further boosted Khama's celebrity status, was also timely.[210]

With the generally able, if patronizing, advice of the missionary Willoughby, who traveled with them, the diKgosi went to considerable effort and expense in adapting their manner to demands of their audience.[211] In the process they successfully mirrored their target constituency as embodiments of its end of the century faith in imperial progress:

> "The three chiefs are very different personages to the Swazi deputation. Sebele looks like a prosperous middle class Englishman, except for his colour. He has a bald head fringed by little straight hair, no wool. Bathwen looks like a well to do licenced victualler and Khama is a tall spare man with all the manners and address of a gentleman. They are by far the most favourable native products that I have seen from any part of Africa."[212]

The public image of the diKgosi was particularly well served by their stress on the threat of an upsurge in the trafficking of spirits: "We fear that they <ie. BSAC> will fill

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209. *Sunday Times* (London) Oct. 6, 1895 (also cited by Sillery *Founding a Protectorate*, p. 227, who further notes that he deposited a microfilm copy of Sebele's personal volume of press cuttings from the trip at Rhodes House. The original, like many other BaKwena Archives, has disappeared in recent years.)

210. Edwin Lloyd's popular profile of the delegation *Three Great African Chiefs*, was also published in 1895 with the specific intent of assisting the their cause but, according to Parsons, *The Image of Khama the Great* p. 47, was both too hastily produced and yet released too late to have had a great impact.

211. WCW/SO 54, Willoughby: "Everywhere we travelled first class and stayed in good Hotels (except where we accepted private hospitality in a few cases.) This was necessary for getting that support in which was essential to the success of our public mission." Sebele, id., spent L 371 .16 .9.

212. PRO CO 417/162 Meade to Bigge, Oct. 5, 1895: cited by Sillery *Founding a Protectorate*, p. 226 (original not seen.)

our country with liquor shops, as they have Bulawayo and some parts of Mashonaland and Matabeleland."[213] Protested Rhodes: "I do object to being beaten by three canting natives especially on score <sic> temperence when two of them, Sebele Bathoen, are known to be utter drunkards."[214] Sebele had, in fact, prudently emulated Khama by becoming a model advocate.[215] It was a clever transformation which was greeted by his LMS missionaries with a mixture of hope and bemusement: "He was certainly the best public speaker of the three, and had a knack for saying things which greatly pleased his auditors. In fact it became rather a joke with some of our friends that 'the sinner,' as he was familiarly called, made the most pious speeches of the lot."[216] Undoubtedly even Khama used the alleged peril of Company liquor as a useful pretext for the expression of more fundamental fears:

> "You can really see now that what they really want is not to govern nicely, but to take our land and sell it that they might see gain....The Company have conquered the Matebele, and taken the land of the people they conquered. We know the custom: but we have not yet heard that it is the custom of any people to take the best lands of their friends....Where will our cattle stay if the waters are taken from us? They will die. The Company wants to impoverish us so that hunger may drive us to become the white man's servants who dig in his mines and gather his wealth."[217]

Prior to their embarkation from Cape Town, the diKgosi had met with both Rhodes and his re-installed puppet High Commissioner, Robinson, both of whom tried to induce rulers

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213. PRO CO 879/44/498 Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen to CO, Sept. 24, 1895.

214. BPP IX, 311, Rhodes to Harris, Nov. 23, 1895.

215. LMS H. Williams, March 27, 1896 notes that Sebele had not touched a drop during five months surrounding his trip to England.

216. LMS Out Corres. Thompson to H. Williams, Jan. 25, 1896.

217. PRO CO 879/44/498 Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen to CO, Nov. 4, 1895.

into engaging in direct negotiations with the company. They also, in vain, attempted to detach Khama from his southern peers through offers of special treatment and aid against his internal opposition. In London, the same message awaited them. Five days after their arrival they were received by Chamberlain who rejected their desire that the status quo remain unchanged for ten years and instructed them to come to terms with the Company.[218] The Secretary thereafter left for a seven week Spanish vacation giving the three time to drum up support, while they continued to resist the BSAC'S solicitations. By November their position had been strengthened by extensive, largely favorable, press coverage and petitions of support. Their campaign contributed to the perception of their victory during Bathoen and Khama's second interview with Chamberlain on Nov. 6, 1895.[219] In his settlement the Secretary promised to maintain imperial control over the diKgosi's reserves in return for their cession of the railway strip and portions of the Kalagadi to the political control of BSAC.[220]

A close look at the details surrounding Chamberlain's award challenges the then popular, and since enduring, interpretation the three had at least come away with "a half a loaf."[221] As Maylam has previously noted, within days of the settlement Rhodes received a private cable from his London

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218. PRO CO 879/44/498 Chamberlain to Robinson, Sept. 20, 1895.

219. BNA S. 466/3 HC to RC, July 27, 1936 encloses a copy of the minutes of the meeting. Sebele was ill.

220. PRO CO 879/44/498 Chamberlain to Robinson and CO to Willoughby, both Nov. 7, 1895 (later also in BNA RC 2/8/1.)

221. LMS Out Corres. Thompson to MacKenzie, March 14, 1896: "this is a case in which half a loaf is better than no bread, and if you had been in England when the Chiefs came, and had been able to realize how tremendously strong was the influence on the side of the Chartered Company....you would, I think, have felt with us that the present settlement represented a very great victory indeed..."

office informing him that "we can obtain administration native reserves when public feeling permit, in meantime indefinite."[222] This belief is supported by Chamberlain's own cable to Robinson that the "transfer of Montsioa, Ikaneng and Lenchwe to B.S.A. Company is to be regarded as installments of a general settlement with B.S.A. Company with regard to the Bechuanaland Protectorate..."[223] In the meantime the diKgosi were told that they must grant the Company Police the right of unrestricted transit.[224]

Perhaps the most devious aspect of Chamberlain's award was his slippery assurances with regards to the western borders of the BaKwena and BaNgwaketse. At the November 6th meeting, that is in the presence of Bathoen and absence of Sebele, he had defined this border as being as being a longitudinal line taking in the westernmost of the BaNgwaketse cattleposts. This guideline, which was initially accepted by the diKgosi on good faith, was specifically framed so as to allow the BSAC to deny the two *merafe* continued access to the Kgalagadi whose importance, as illustrated during the Sebele-Kgari dispute, was well understood by imperial agents. In the instructions quietly worked out with Goold-Adams, the Company shareholder charged with demarcating the line, a distinction was made between BaNgwaketse cattleposts and those occupied "by Bakalahari as servants" in which only the former would be included in the reserve.[225] This exercise was to be justified by a suddenly acquired concern on the part of the British about "the lawfulness of the relations of the Bechuana tribes

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222. BPP IX, 311, (telegram) Harris to Rhodes, Nov. 11, 1895.
223. BNA HC 196/1 Chamberlain to Robinson, Nov. 19, 1895.
224. BNA HC 196/1 CO to Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen, Nov. 18, 1895.
225. PRO CO 879/44/498 Chamberlain to Robinson, Dec. 30, 1895. Also (telegraphic) Chamberlain to Robinson, Dec. 15, 1895. BNA HC 196/1 Robinson to Newton, Dec. 17, 1895.

proper towards the Bakalahari."[226] As to why "cattle-post actually occupied by Bangwaketsi" should also define the western extent of Kweneng the Colonial Secretary was explicit: "The reason why Sebele's western boundary was not defined by his cattle-posts was that Major Goold-Adams believed that the Bakwena had scattered cattle-posts in their own occupation very much further west than those of the Bangwaketsi."[227] To make matters worse from a BaKwena/BaNgwaketse standpoint it quickly became apparent that Goold-Adams did not consider himself to be under any obligation to assure that their reserves be demarcated as contiguous territories.[228] Had the cynical intentions of Chamberlain and Company been fully implemented the reserves of the BaKwena and BaNgwaketse would have been reduced to untenable locations, along the lines of those previously created by the British for the BaTswana living south of the Molopo, thus making an absolute mockery of the promise of the Queen's continued direct rule over them. Nor was Khama off the hook. Although the BaNgwato, much to Rhodes' frustration, had been given a generous reserve, which included BaKalanga lands where their pretension of overrule was debatable, it soon became Chamberlain's desire that part of Khama's reserve be surrendered to BSAC on the pretext of a need to accommodate his local opposition.[229] But for the Raid

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226. PRO CO 879/44/498 Chamberlain to Robinson, Dec. 30, 1895. This was the context for the debate, which surfaced between Bathoen and Lloyd on one hand and Goold-Adams on the other, over the status of the BaKgalagadi during the first half of 1896: CO 879/47/517 Bathoen to Chamberlain, April 3; Lloyd to Chamberlain, April 7; and Goold-Adams to Bower, April 9, 1896.

227. PRO CO 879/44/498 Chamberlain to Robinson, Dec. 30, 1895.

228. PRO 879/47/517 Lloyd to Chamberlain, April 7, 1896 noting Bathoens objection that "we must have our country compact and not in four pieces."

229. BNA HC 196/1 Chamberlain to Robinson, Dec. 10, 1895. This pretext of course could have been eventually used against the BaKwena as well.

it seems unlikely that the diKgosi would have been able to hold on to the reserves that were ultimately confirmed in their possession in 1899.

Following Chamberlain's disingenuous award, the diKgosi were finally given the honor of an audience with the "Great White Queen" at Windsor, where they were praised for their loyalty and sent off with SeTswana bibles bearing the royal coat of arms, her photograph and portrait, and shawls for their wives. A relaxed Sebele could afford to play the innocent abroad:

> "The corridors and the magnificent palace where she lives are all lined with stalwart soldiers, as big as I am, in glittering uniforms. None ever moved. They all stood erect and motionless like the marble statues in the streets of London. While I passed through their line I boldly tested one of these giants. I thrust my finger almost into his eye to make certain that he was a living being, and not a statue placed to add to the grandeur of the palace. To my great suprize he never flinched, but merely rewarded me with a smile. When I was in one of Her Majesty's splendid apartments, I was greatly astonished to see an ordinary, tiny house fly! It was a puzzle to me to know how it got there, for I could hardly believe that even Death could enter such a place."[230]

On November 23rd, four days after their reception at Windsor, the diKgosi set sail for home. Exactly one month later they crossed the Molopo where, at Kgore, they were given heroes' welcomes by thousands gathered from throughout the southern Protectorate.[231] Sebele, accompanied by Khama, then proceeded to Molepolole where, after passing Jameson's Raiders on the way, they arrived in time for Christmas Eve services. The MoNgwato remained the guest of the BaKwena through the arrival of the New Year, joining the southerners in their

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230. Mockford, p. 129. Sebele, more than six feet tall, was a towering presence in his time and place.

231. LMS Willoughby to friends in England, March 7, 1896.

prayers of hope and thanksgiving. Their prayers were being answered. On the 29th December Jameson audaciously launched his "flotation." The international scandal caused by the surrender of the Raiders three days later led to the complete, ultimately permanent, restoration of direct imperial rule over the Protectorate. It was a profound but brief moment of grace, for the BaKwena and their neighbors were already falling into an ecological catastrophe.

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Dissertation

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE BAKWENA DYNASTY OF SOUTH-CENTRAL BOTSWANA, 1820-1940.

Volume II of II

by

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Chapter 4

KWENENG BECOMES A NATIVE RESERVE, 1895-1911

Between 1895 and 1911, the onset of ecological crisis served as a catalyst for the rapid transformation of Kweneng into a labor reserve. Despite the dislocations that accompanied this process, Sebele I was able to preserve his local leadership by balancing his new responsibilities as a colonial Chief with the continued expectations placed upon him as the son of Sechele. His ability to maintain this balance was facilitated by the Imperial government's post-Jameson Raid restoration of direct rule over the Protectorate, which was coupled with a policy of non-investment within the territory. Under this dispensation Britain's proconsuls depended on their Chiefs for revenue collection and (low cost) local administration. Thus, despite the growing economic marginalization of their communities, the unexpected survival of direct, parsimonious, rule from London allowed the diKgosi to negotiate a significant degree of autonomy for both themselves and their polities. Due to this circumstance the BaTswana monarchies continued to enjoy a political status that set them apart from most of the other Chieftaincies then found within the southern African archipelago of labor reserves.[1]

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1. Mweli Skota, pp. 360-65, in 1930 distinguished between "Chiefs" and a select handful of "Natural Rulers" who are otherwise honored with their indigenous titles. Included among this latter elite were the then incumbent rulers of the BagaKgafela-Kgatla, BaNgwaketse, and BaNgwato, as well as BaKwena. Also in 1930 Skota moved that "the Chiefs of Swaziland and the Bechuanaland Protectorate" be invited to his proposed All (Pan) African Convention, which would otherwise consist of representatives of various associations, organizations, and parties drawn from across the continent- "Report by T.D. Skota, Secretary-General of the African National Congress, January, 1930" in T. Karis, G. Carter, and S. Johns (edits.) *From Protest to Challenge, A Documentary History*

This chapter begins with an an examination of how ecological crisis and colonial policy contributed to the general immiseration of the BaKwena and their growing dependency on migrant-labor. While the difficulty of measuring both the scope and destination of the migration is recognized, it is suggested that Kweneng's status as a labor reserve had been established by the early decades of the twentieth century. After an examination of the material circumstance of the BaKwena monarchy, the chapter then closes with an account of the latter years of Sebele I's reign with particular reference to his and his secretary, Peter Sidzumo's, leadership in organizing opposition to the prospect of incorporation into the nascent Union of South Africa. The success of the last initiative, beyond paving the way for the emergence Botswana as a nation, underscores the continued vitality of *bogosi* at the time.

Part 1: Ecological Crisis and Migrant-Labor

During the last half decade of the nineteenth century, the Kweneng was plagued by rinderpest, drought, locusts, and an array of human epidemics. In the wake of this ecological crisis, as many as a quarter or more of its population may have perished, along with most of its livestock and much of its remaining wildlife. Local livelihoods were also influenced by parallel developments such as the imposition of Hut Tax, the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Boer War, and the completion of the Mafikeng to Bulawayo rail-road. A significant outcome of all of these tribulations was a expansion in the flow of labor out of the Reserve. While the absence of comprehensive data makes it impossible to fully quantify the extent of this migration, a variety of sources indicate that by the end of Sebele I's reign the area had already become a labor reserve.

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of African Politics in South Africa, 1882-1964, (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford 1972), vol. 1, pp. 306-08.

Its migrant pool consisted of women as well as men drawn from across the local social spectrum. This fact when coupled with evidence of the decline of many cattle herds is suggestive of a process of widespread immiseration, which served to undermine the material basis of the late-nineteenth century SeKwena hierarchy. Contrary to the predictions of some, the old social order's material misfortunes did not lead directly to its political demise.

Sebele's return from Britain did not bring back the rain whose absence during the planting season of 1895 had coincided with his. By March of 1896 it was clear that the sorghum as well as maize crop had failed.[2] That their country was once more entering into a drought cycle was an unwelcome but well known hardship for the BaKwena as was the appearance, during that same month, of locust swarms; the destructiveness of the cicadas was at least always palliated by their edible nature. But nothing in the experiences of the white-haired members of the *morafe* could have prepared them for the simultaneous arrival of rinderpest, or *bolowane* as the scourge is locally remembered.[3] By the end of the month it had reached the junction of the Ngotwane and Limpopo rivers, from whence it began to quickly spread across the interior of Kweneng.

Sebele responded to the epizootic by calling upon his subjects to follow the *Makgoa's* orders that they shoot and

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2. LMS H. Williams, March 27, 1896.
3. From the *lowa-* to be emaciated or skeleton like.

bury their afflicted livestock.[4] The fact that most of the herds that were initially tainted belonged to the BagaMashadi holdouts at Kolobeng, along with the faith of Kgosidintsi and others in the inoculations of their *dingaka*, and the general practice of salvaging biltong from bovine carcasses, combined to undermine this control effort.[5] Given the disease's rapid rate of diffusion any hope of containment was probably doomed from the beginning. By mid-May it was reported that Kgosidintsi had lost all of his cattle while Sebele's herd of some 10,000 had been reduced to a mere 77 beasts.[6] Throughout the Protectorate, official and missionary estimates of herd destruction ranged at or above 90%.[7] While such figures may have been exaggerated, there can be no doubt that most of the BaTswana cattle, the principal repositories of the society's wealth, perished almost overnight. Because all ruminating animals were infected small-stock as well as antelopes and similar wildlife species also succumbed in large numbers.[8]

By October of 1896 many of BaKwena were reportedly dying

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4. LMS H. Williams, May 15, 1896. CPP G.28-'96 "Rinderpest Conference," (Held at Vryburg Aug. 31 & Sept. 1 1896, attended by delegates from the Cape Colony, Natal, Basutoland, the Bechuanaland Protectorate, South African Republic, Orange Free State and German South West Africa): Most of the Colonial Administrations efforts were actually directed at preventing the disease from spreading further south and keeping the road to the north open; by Aug. of 1896, p. 8, between forty and fifty thousand carcasses were buried or burnt along the road.

5. LMS H. Williams, May 15, 1896.

6. LMS H. Williams, May 15, 1896.

7. *British Bechuanaland, Annual Report 1896/97*, (HMSO, 1898), p. 10. LMS: Willoughby, April 21, June 29; Wookey, April 28, Sept. 18; and Good, Sept. 24, 1897.

8. In Ngamiland the depletion of wildlife was so severe as to lead to a temporary contraction of the Tsetse belt around the Okavango: Andrew Murray "The North-West" in Morton and Ramsay, pp. 110-22, pp. 113-14.

of famine aggravated by dysentery and typhoid fever.[9] To most of the missionaries this "time of great spiritual testing" was as much a cause for hope as pity.[10] In the words of Edwin Lloyd:

> "I have long seen that their cattle stood between our people and their progress. While they possessed so many cattle, the young men and boys were obliged to herd them, and were prevented from coming to our schools to learn. In addition the cattleposts were the principal schools of heathenism, where untold evil was both taught and practiced."[11]

As Lloyd further noted, not only had the boys already begun to to outnumber the girls in the classroom but, out of necessity, the men were now leaving in mass to work on the rail-road or at Johannesburg. His evident satisfaction with this latter development was widely shared within the L.M.S. Both of the Molepolole missionaries were, in fact, tempted to look upon this aspect of their parishioner's perdition as an instrument of divine grace.

> Mary Partridge: "The BaKwena need to learn that next to the 'love of God' comes 'the dignity of labour.' Much as I like them I cannot help saying that Bakwena men are frightfully lazy and selfish. They would infinitely rather kopa food from the whites than do a little work to earn it. Some of them have been persuaded to go to work at the mines at Kimberly and some have gone through sheer necessity. No doubt many more will be driven to go. It will do them good."[12]

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9. LMS H. Williams, Oct. 12, 1896. *Annual Report of London Missionary Society* (1898), p. 156, noted that the dying cattle during the rinderpest had polluted the water supply. *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, Nov. 7, 1896, letter by John Brown (I am grateful to Barry Morton for drawing my attention to this article.)
10. LMS H. Williams, May 5, 1896.
11. LMS Lloyd, Sept. 15, 1896.
12. LMS Partridge, Nov. 27, 1896.

> Howard Williams: "The loss of their cattle has driven large numbers to seek work. Certainly the best thing that could happen as far as teaching them the value of labour....Work was the last thing thought of except among the poorer classes and with these the period rarely exceed 6 months. All that is altered. A generation will pass before this country will recover its lost wealth of cattle.[13]

Missionary sentiments about the blessings of remunerated toil complemented the objectives of the Colonial Office, which saw the famine as an occasion to encourage men to seek wages. As an inducement it imported grain for sale and rationing through food for work schemes.[14] The BaKwena at first proved reluctant to take advantage of these opportunities: "The Government brought immense supplies of food close to them and the Railway afforded opportunity to work but scarcely any of them would turn out to work and many more would not go to get food offered to them at a very small rate."[15] Many were then fully engaged in trying to salvage hides as well as meat from carcasses, and in hunting and gathering. Another factor contributing to their rejection was Sebele's initial desire to preserve his own prerogative as the overseer of food distribution. For this reason he joined Bathoen and Khama in refusing the aid offered through the Bechuanaland Relief Committee, which had been sponsored by official and missionary elements:

> "The offer has come through the wrong channels. The very fact that the Government officials have written to the Missionaries for information has caused my people to look upon the offer with

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13. H. Williams- LMS "Annual Report Molepolole, 1896." In contrast the Anglican priest Clissold, M.S. p. 81, would write a generation later that: "No the mines are not a blessing to the African, whatever they may have been to us."

14. PRO CO 879/46/515 SS to HC, April 16; and HC to SS, May 5, 1896. Small amounts of food aid were, however, freely distributed to some women and children.

15. LMS H. Williams, Oct. 12, 1896.

> suspicion. The Government in some of their dealings with my people have not been true to their word."[16]

This aloof posture was soon overwhelmed by desperate circumstance. In Kweneng *bogosi* lacked the resources, and quickly lost the will, to stave off the ruinous course of events. By December of 1898 over 1,400 Molepolole residents, primarily women and children, were receiving daily rations from the Committee.[17]

Throughout 1897 and 1898 missonary reports consistently speak of horrific mortality rates brought on by famine and fever. When Howard Williams visited Kolobeng in June 1898 he was shocked to find the place nearly deserted. Kgari's heir, Baanami, told him that his followers were either "in graves or scattered in all directions seeking food or work."[18] The missionary supports this observation by supplying statistics for four of the community's kgotla showing recent death to (former) membership ratios of 57/150, 21/70, 11/14, and 14/40. He further noted that 15/34 church members at Kumakwane had died along with nearly all the members of its Griqua community, and an estimated 20% of the entire population at Tlokweng. During this same period an estimated 1,500 died at Kanye.[19] It was the children, elderly, and servant who are said to have suffered the most; over one third of the students at

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16. LMS Sebele to H. Williams: Williams, July 31, 1896. Also PRO 879/46/515 Newton to Robinson, Oct. 24, 1896. *Annual Report of London Missionary Society* (1897), p. 6: Showing L 604 raised by Bechuanaland Relief Fund.

17. LMS Wookey, Dec. 29, 1898. Earlier his predecessor stated that he denied rations to families: "where the father was in good health and able to work." Other reports by Wookey Sept. 11, 29 and Nov. 10, 24 also Lloyd (for Kanye) Sept. 17, 1897 and Sept. 22, 1898.

18. LMS H. Williams, June 27, 1898; also June 6, 1898.

19. LMS "Annual Report Kanye, 1898." Also for Molepolole: Wookey, Sept. 11, 1898 and Sept. 29, 1898 which speak of many deaths.

the L.M.S. school in Molepolole apparently perished during 1898-99.[20] In desperation, men began to leave the countryside in search of wages which, with the completion of the railway as far as Bulawayo in 1897, for the most part meant migration to the farms, towns, and mines outside of the Protectorate:

> "All of the tribes, except perhaps Linchwe's, are at present very short of food, and many have not the means of purchasing sufficient food for their families. They are, however, making an effort to obtain money for the purpose of buying food by going out to work at Kimberly, Jagersfontien, Johannesburg or other places."[21]

As a result of this growing need for wages the Protectorate was reportedly "flooded by both white and coloured persons calling themselves Labour Agents."[22] While no comprehensive set of numbers exists for calculating the total size of the BaTswana exodus during the late 1890's, official statements, as well as missionary impressions, support the contention that it must have been of considerable magnitude. The Annual Report for 1897/98, for example, observes that: "So many men have gone that most villages present quite a deserted appearance."[23]

If food for work was a carrot designed to lure BaTswana into wage labor the imposition of the Hut Tax was the stick.[24] As Protectorate official remarked at the time of its

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20. *Annual Report of the London Missionary Society*, (1899), pp. 177-78.

21. *British Bechuanaland Annual Report 1896/97*, p. 10. The completion of the railway led to the decrement of the once lucrative waggon trade as well as construction jobs along the line.

22. PRO CO 879/57/574 Goold-Adams to Milner, Oct. 4, 1898 enclosed in Milner to Chamberlain, March 27, 1899. Goold-Adams further notes in his letter that, 1896-98, 2,068 were recruited by the Rand Native Labour Association.

23. *British Bechuanaland Annual Report 1897/98* (HMSO, 1899), p. 10.

24. BNA BNB 979 H.C. Proclamation 10 of 1899; Correspondence in PRO CO 879/57/574.

introduction: "it has a twofold advantage: it drives young men to work and it raises revenue."[25] Bathoen, Khama, and Sebele had, as a concession designed to preserve direct imperial control, agreed, in principal, to the tax during their 1895 negotiations with the Colonial Office.[26] By the time its actual imposition, in April 1899, the the population of Southern Protectorate was still being pushed into migrancy by severe drought. Bathoen reportedly protested that: "owing to the famine, not many people were left in his country; that most had gone to work or to look for food, that this was the fourth year in succession that their crops had failed; that he was almost alone in his village; that the young men who had gone out to the mines were now living there."[27] Thereafter the increasingly rigorous enforcement of tax collection continued to be an important factor in assuring the steady departure of workers. In the Kweneng this was especially true from 1924. Sebele II then adopted, in response to mounting colonial pressure, a policy "of ordering all able-bodied men who have neglected to pay their tax to either pay or go to the mines and thereby earn money to pay."[28] During that same year out of a total of £ 3,725 in tax receipts paid in Molepolole, £ 1,768 was directly remitted by labor recruiters as cash advances on 861 new contracts.

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25. David Massey "Labor Migration and Rural Development in Botswana," (Boston University Ph.D. Thesis, Geography 1981) p. 70.

26. PRO CO 879/44/498 Khama, Sebele, and Bathoen to CO, Sept. 24, 1895.

27. PRO 879/52/552 Surmon to Goold-Adams, April 21, 1899. The BaNgwato are said to have enjoyed better rains during the late 1890's than their southern neighbors, Parsons "Economic History of Khama's Country," pp. 127-28, and thus during the first year of the hut tax raised £ 3,816 which even in the context of their superior numbers stands in sharp contrast with the BaKwena and BaNgwaketse figures of £ 379 and £ 98 respectively.

28. BNA DCMol 2/9 "Annual Reports, 1919-29": Report for 1923-24, March 8, 1925.

Almost all of the government revenue raised by taxes was applied to meet recurrent administrative costs.[29] In Kweneng this meant paying for the local magistrate and his police. Ironically, for many years the major function of this establishment was the prosecution of tax defaulters. For example out of the 335 criminal cases prosecuted in Molepolole between 1921 and 1925, 262 concerned Hut Tax violations.[30] Resident officials also enforced other laws, such as those against poaching, cattle smuggling and vagrancy, whose effect, if not cause, was to further encourage migration.[31] Indeed the construction of the Police Camp was practically the only significant public work instituted by the British during their eighty-one year occupation of Kweneng. Otherwise what did exist, prior to 1966, in the way of such things as schools, health clinics, roads, dams, and boreholes, were almost entirely the product of local exertions and/or outside support from non-governmental sources. It is thus apparent that the Hut Tax not only contributed to the local economy's loss of the potential surplus value of its labor but also deprived it of revenue which could have contributed to internal development. The broader implications of this policy were appreciated by some contemporary officials. In 1916 the then

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29. Another significant expenditure from 1899-1909 was the subsidy, totaling L 215,000, granted to the BSAC Railway which principally served the needs of the Rhodesian settler economy- PRO CO 879/97/907 & 102/936 "B.P. Estimates," 1908-09 & 1909-10. Lord Hailey *Native Administration in British African Territories, Part V. The High Commission Territories* (Commonwealth Relations Office, HMSO London 1953) p. 165. Pim, pp. 35, 172.

30. BNA 2DCMol/13, Criminal Record Book 1918-37.

31. The Cape Vagrancy Acts gave local officials the power to arrest those who were deemed "idle and disorderly persons"- BNA BNB 979 (M. Williams): Applicability of Cape Acts under Order-in-Council of June 10, 1891 confirmed by Order-in-Council of the General Law Proclamation of 1909. S 47/3 "Forced Labour" RC to HC Aug. 1926 further cites Cape Vagrancy Acts #23 of 1879 and #27 of 1886 to procure labor for Locust Destruction Proclamation of 1923.

Financial Secretary, Eason, observed in a minute on new taxation proposals that: "I am not sure also that we are not gradually putting the territory into an economically unsound position by seeing interest and I believe capital go out of the country and laying no foundations for new trades nor for the betterment of existing ones."[32] Indeed by the end of the first decade of the century the total value of Protectorate exports (in non-crisis years), mostly maize, livestock, hides, and skins, was less than two thirds the value of its imports.[33]

Labor migration by BaKwena did not, of course, originate during the era of formal colonialism. As previously noted some had gone off to work for the Boers at least as early as 1844 and had continued to do so after the BaTswana-Boer war of 1852-53. By 1872 others had also begun to seek employment at the Diamond Fields.[34] In 1876, the year of Bailie's visit, about five percent of the black mine workers indentified by origin in the Griqualand West Gazette were BaKwena.[35] Other figures indicate that between 1878 and 1882 Sechele annually sent just

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32. BNA S 25/3 "Hut Tax, 1916-28," Financial Sec. to Act.GS, July 17, 1916.

33. *British South Africa, Annual Statement of Trade and Shipping of the Colonies and Territories of the South African Customs Union* 1906-09.

34. LMS "Annual Report, Molepolole 1872": "others again went among the Boers and to the Diamond Fields." Gwazwi Tyamzashe "Life at the Diamond Fields" in *Kaffir Express* Aug. 1874, reprinted in F. Wilson and D. Perrot (edits.) *Outlook on a Century* (Lovedale Press, 1973) pp. 19-21: "There are Bushmen, Korannas, Hottentots, Griquas, Batlaping, Damaras, Barolong, Barutse, Bakhatla, Bakwena, Bamangwatu, Bapeli, Magalaka, Maswazi, Matswetswe, Matonga, Matebele, Mabaca, Mampondo, Mamfengu, Batemba, Maxosa etc."

35. William Worger *South Africa's City of Diamonds, Mine Workers and Monopoly Capitalism in Kimberly, 1867-1895*, (Yale Univ. Press, 1987), pp. 74-75. Total number of men in the survey was 12,268 of whom another 7% were BaKalanga. PRO CO 879/14/162 Sechele to Lanyon, March 24, 1877: "During Mr. Bailies absence I allowed several parties to proceed to the Fields in search of labour."

over 500 men to work in the Kimberley and DuToits Pan, while total registration of residents from greater Kweneng, including Kgafela-BaKgatla, at the mines during each of the years was over 2,000.[36] In 1884 the figure declined to a mere 33 but in 1889 it was reported that Kweneng's roads were once more full of laborers "flocking" to and from the Fields.[37] The 1891 census for the Cape Colony shows 3,542 residents from "Bechuanaland" at the Fields, possibly half of whom came from what was then Protectorate (south of the 22 parallel.)[38] At the time not all BaKwena migrants went the Diamond Fields. Among those who did not all worked in the pits. Prior to 1887 it has been estimated that up to two thirds of all Africans who did come to the mines deserted within a week of their employment in order to take advantage of more attractive opportunities in the informal sector of the adjacent locations.[39] While probably most BaTswana from north of the Molopo remained as transients, returning home once they had achieved such individual or regimental goals as the acquisition of guns, plows, and waggons, at least some stayed

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36. CPP G.20-'81, G.36-'82, and G.8-'83 "Native Affairs Reports." Maylam, p. 211 (not seen Sieborger "The Recruitment and Organization of African Labour for the Kimberly Diamond Mines, 1871-88," (MA Thesis, Rhodes University, 1975.)

37. LMS H. Williams "1889 Annual Report for Molepolole."

38. *Census of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope for 1891* pp. xxxi, also 78-79, 82-83. Another 27 individuals were were from "Khama's Country."

39. Bob Turrel "Kimberly: labour and compounds, 1871-1888," in S. Marks & R. Rathbone (eds.) *Industrialization and Social Change in South Africa* (Longman, London 1982) pp. 45-76. Even in later years most seem to have worked in the informal sector. Of the 66,406 Africans who registered for labor at Kimberly in 1900 only 10,000 stayed at the compounds while another 2,500 were said to be "employed in town"- CPP G.52-'01, "Native Affairs Report for 1900," p. 75.

on as longterm residents.[40] One such individual was a MoKwena known by his *oorlams* name, Petrus January, who left Molepolole to become prominent as an Anglican *moruti* at Kimberly during the 1870's.[41] Thus, prior to the Hut Tax and the ecological crisis of the late 1890's, a firm foundation had already been established for migrant labor from Kweneng.

Unfortunately given the available sources it is impossible to fully quantify the true extent of labor migration from the B.P., especially prior to the gradual tightening of recruitment practices from 1930s. Even in recent decades it seems likely that BaTswana migration to South Africa has been significantly under-reported.[42] Schapera, in the context of his 1943 survey, states:

> "There is no accurate information about the number of Natives who leave their homes every year to work either in other parts of the Territory or outside its borders. Nor till recently, were statistics of any kind available about the numbers employed outside Bechuanaland at any one time,

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40. Gwazwi Tyamzashe "Life at the Diamond Fields," notes that: "Those coming from far up in the interior, such as the Bakwena, Bamangwatu, Mapeli, Matebeles etc., come with the sole purpose of securing guns. Some of them resolve to stay no longer here than is necessary to get some six or seven pounds for the gun. Hence you will see hundreds of them leaving the Fields, and as many arriving from the north almost every day..."

41. DRC 15/7/2 Gonin (A) Oct. 6, 1868, etc. (B) Dec. 18, 1875; Dec. 4, 1877. (Another prominent example was the grandfather of Z.K. Matthews who was a MoTaloate from Gammangwato.)

42. See- C. Colclough and S. McCarthy *The Political Economy of Botswana* (Oxford Univ. Press 1980) pp. 253-257 (appendix 2.) who estimate that the total number of BaTswana officially recruited in recent years (exclusively for mine work) represents less than one half of the total labor flow to the RSA. Also the 1989-90 country profile of South Africa by the Economist Intelligence Unit, p. 14, which estimates that in addition to approximately 350,000 registered migrant workers from neighboring states there are another 1 million "illegal" immigrants (exclusive of those from the "independent (BCTV) homelands.")

except in regard to the Witwatersrand and other proclaimed labour districts of the Union."[43]

The above qualifications are significant given some of the confused interpretations and suspect statistics which have since appeared based on Schapera's data. A notable example is a recent study by William Duggan in which it is asserted that: "The number of Bechuanaland citizens working in South Africa was never much greater than 5,000 until the economic crisis of the early 1930's and the removal of the tropical recruiting ban in 1934."[44] This erroneous statement is based on his misuse of Schapera's statistical table for "Bechuanaland Protectorate Natives Employed in Proclaimed Labour Districts of the Union of South Africa, 1910-1940," which shows the "average number employed" annually prior to 1930 to range between 2,891 and 5,020.[45]

Beyond questions about the accuracy of the numbers contained in the above table, its value is limited by the fact that only a discrete set of locations were ever constituted as

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43. Schapera *Migrant Labour and Tribal Life* (Oxford Univ. Press 1947), p. 33.

44. William Duggan *An Economic Analysis of Southern African Agriculture*, p. 173. In his book, based on an his PhD. thesis, Duggan uses Kweneng as a case study for his, p. 5, "neo-classical" or "microeconomic" analysis of the entire sub-continents agriculture from 1800 to 1980. Elsewhere, in "The Kweneng in the Colonial Era: A Brief Economic History" in *BNR*, vol. 9, 1977, pp. 41-48, Duggan, citing a NRC memorandum to Schapera in BNA S. 437/1/1, states, p. 42, that "In 1913, fewer than 2,000 men were recruited in the Protectorate." However Schapera himself, *Migrant Labour*, p. 225, gives the number of NRC recruits from the B.P. in 1913 as 4,680 with an additional 767 working in the goldmines as non-recruited laborers.

45. Schapera *Migrant Labour*, p. 222 (appendix A.)

"Proclaimed Labour Districts."[46] To appreciate the importance of this fact one need only compare the divergence between Schapera's statistics for the Labour Districts and his combined tallies of B.P. workers employed by firms associated with the Transvaal Chamber of Mines and its two recruiting agencies, the Native Recruiting Corporation (NRC) and the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (Wenela), between 1902 and 1943.[47] While the latter table shows that 8,986 Protectorate workers were hired in 1914 the number listed under "Mines and Works" in the Labour Districts for the same year is only 4,051.

Excluded from both of the above sets of data are many employment centers, such as the alluvial diamond diggings at Lictenburg or the coal mines of Natal, which were once popular destinations.[48] In addition virtually all those who worked on farms or in such non-mining fields as manufacturing, the retail trade, municipal and private services, as well as the informal sector, were also excluded. The potential significance of this oversight is implicit in Morton's estimate that only about ten percent of the migrants from Kgatleng during the

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46. *Native Administration in the Union of South Africa*, (2nd edition, Union of South Africa- G.P. S.4438- 1948-9--2,900), p. 185, notes that: "In labour districts, stricter regulations are applied as regards the registration of contracts and the issue of registration certificates or passes." Until 1922 all of these Districts were located in the Transvaal, thereafter a few other areas, notably Jagersfontien and Viljoensdrift in the Orange Free State and Kimberly, were also so gazetted.

47. See "Sources of Labour, 1902-43" in Schapera *Migrant Labour*, p. 225 (appendix C-b.)

48. Pim Report, p. 31. M. Hodgeson & W.G. Ballinger *Britian in Southern Africa, no. 2, The Bechuanaland Protectorate* (Lovedale Press, 1931) p. 17. Schapera *Migrant Labour*, pp. 29, 92, 152. Also the reminiscences of Gustav Ernst Segatle of eastern Kweneng, as recorded by Hoyte Alverson in *Mind in the Heart of Darkness* (Yale University Press, 1978) pp. 243-249.

interwar period worked in mines.[49] In this context it is notable that the sharp decline in the B.P. workforce at the Witwatersrand mines after 1915 coincides with the onset of a period of rapid expansion in the production of goods and services within South Africa spurred by wartime demand. Despite the continued longterm growth of the goldmines and economic hardship accompanied by higher taxation within Botswana, it was not until 1937 that the level of employment at the Rand mines exceeded its previous, 1914, peak.

In addition to those BaTswana who went to South Africa there were many others who, most especially during the early decades of the century, worked elsewhere. Between 1915 and 1930 colonial authorities actively assisted South-West African employers in their importation of B.P. labor.[50] Initially a few hundred were so contracted for wartime work with the railroads.[51] After 1923 thousands more worked along the Diamond coast.[52]

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49. F. Morton "Popular unrest in the Kgatleng," in Morton & Ramsay, pp. 82-91,-p. 83. Also BNA RC 12/16, AC(S) to R.C., March 31, 1905, which notes that very few migrants from Kweneng passed through the hands of labor agents.

50. BNA RC 1/29 & S 92/10. South-West African recruitment during the period previously discussed in Schapera *Migrant Labour*, p. 29; and John Taylor *Mine Labour Migration from Botswana to South Africa*, (unpublished 1981 Univ. of Liverpool PhD thesis, Geography), p. 69; as well as in his earlier article "Mine Labour Recruitment in the Bechuanaland Protectorate," *BNR*, vol. 10, 1978, pp.99-112, p. 101-02. From 1904-12 a significant number of Cape workers worked in German South-West Africa: William Beinart "Jamani" in W. Bienart & C. Bundy *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa* pp. 166-190. Whether any Protectorate BaTswana participated in this earlier flow is unknown.

51. BNA RC 1/29: Shows 405 BaKgatla and BaLete so recruited in 1915. See also Schapera, *Migrant Labour*, p. 29.

52. BNA S 92/10, which indicates that most recruits were BaKalanga from Tati and the Bukalanga region of Gammangwato, gives the following figures: 1923-1570, 1924-1465, 1925-1643, 1926-1824, 1927-1901, 1928-1639. League of Nations C.452 M.66, 1925, VI, "Re. Mandatory Powers- Report for South-West Africa 1924," p. 24, on the other hand, states that Haskins' firm in

Another terminus was the Rhodesias whose "numerous Gold Companies" were, by 1898, said to be recruiting heavily inside the Protectorate.[53] While according to Schapera the BSAC territories were, prior to about 1910, particularly popular with the BaNgwato and BaKgatla, evidence confirms that BaKwena were also approached by local representatives of the Rhodesian Native Labour Bureau.[54] Although subsequently overshadowed as a destination by the Union, this migration persisted and eventually came to exert a notable influence on political and trade union development within the Northern Protectorate.[55] Almost all of the migrants who went to the lands of the north during the twentieth century took up non-mining employment.[56] One of the few BaKwena known to have taken part in this ensuing exodus was Mosarwa Sechele who, during the late nineteen-twenties, worked as a chauffeur at Livingstone. In addition to the neighboring colonies a relative

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Francistown is reported to have recruited 2,653 such workers in 1923-24 and that 1,723 "Bechuana" arrived from Jan.-Nov. 1924. Also "Schapera *Migrant Labour*, p. 223, notes that passes listed under diamond mines refers to those in South-West Africa: 1928-2153, 1929-2188, 1930-1731.

53. *Chamber of Mines, 10th Annual Report*, p. 74, Letter R.C. to Chamber of Mines, Dec. 17, 1898. Also PRO 879/68/656 BSAC to I.S., Oct. 28, 1900 (on Company recruitment in B.P.) Communication from Barry Morton: The *Bulawayo Chronicle*, April 22, 1898, repoted that RNLA had recuited 50 "boys from Palapye" during the month.

54. Schapera *Migrant Labour*, pp. 27,47. BNA SOC Sebele to Peifech(?)- Rhodesia Native Labour, Sept. 5, 1908. Also S. Plaatje "Gokatweng and the Buffaloes," *A Sechuana Reader* pp. 30-35, p. 32. Interview w/Ratlou Sebetlele, April 14, 1987.

55. BNA Div. Comm. North 9/3 "Intelligence Reports, 1953-61": particularly references to Rhodesia Railways African Workers Union and Bulawayo based Bechuanaland Cultural Club. Leonard Barnes, *The New Boer War* (Hogarth, London, 1932), p. 135, implies that the Rhodesias remained an important destination in 1931; but Schapera *Migrant Labour*, p. 46, in 1943 estimated that only about 300 men, mostly BaNgwato, were there.

56. This is confirmed by the monthly RNLA figure published in the *Bulawayo Chronicle*, 1898-1912 (select figures supplied by Barry Morton.) *The Annual Reports of Southern Rhodesia* from 1923 also show no significant B.P. presence at the mines.

handful of B.P. residents traveled to such distant climes as Angola, Nyasaland and beyond. In 1916, 555 BaTswana, including the future Sebele II, were enlisted in the Protectorate to serve in France with the South African Native Labour Contingent,[57] while sometime earlier Gokatweng Gayalashwe, the senior son of the Kgosana of booRathosa, is said to have "even been as far as Egypt."[58]

Another statistical source of limited value is the "Annual Returns of Passes Issued to B.P. Natives to leave the Territory."[59] Beyond the fact that these records were only preserved after 1928, one here has both official and non-official testimony of a widespread avoidance of registration.[60] Before the 1948 victory of the Nationalist Party the prevailing policy of the Union Government abetted this phenomenon:

> "In the Transvaal and Orange Free State, where (male) Natives are required to carry passes in order to move from one place to another, there is no doubt that Natives from Bechuanaland Protectorate are arrested for being passless if found wandering abroad, but when passless Natives report at Pass Offices every endeavour is made to ascertain whether they are wanted for any criminal offence, and, if they have clear records, the position at present is that they are given permits to seek work."[61]

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57. BNA RC 1/29: 74 BaKwena, also 203 BaNgwaketse, 127 BaKgatla, 49 BaLete, 32 BaTlokwa, and 70 from "northern Protectorate" (mostly BaKalanga from the Tati.) Others may have enlisted within the Union itself.

58. Plaatje "Gokatweng and the Buffaloes," p. 30.

59. Figures in Schapera *Migrant Labour and Tribal Life*, p. 223 (appendix B.); as well as various *Annual Reports for the Bechuanaland Protectorate.*

60. Schapera *Migrant Labour*, pp. 86-90. Pim Report, p. 32. Barnes, pp. 134-35. Ballinger and Hodgeson, p. 17.

61. Schapera *Migrant Labour*, p. 88-89: Letter to author from Union Dept. of Native Affairs, Aug. 30, 1944. Also cited is a similar letter from the Sec. of Native Affairs (Union) to G.S. (B.P.), Nov. 24, 1938.

Finally it should be noted that, prior to Schapera's survey, females were completely absent from the statistical data on labor migration.[62] Their early participation is, nonetheless, indicated by South African census data, which record the Protectorate as having been the birthplace of 1,194 "Bantu" female residents in 1911 and 3,730 in 1921; numbers that are almost one-third the size of the corresponding figures for males during the same years.[63] Also suggestive were early efforts to curb the departure of women from the reserves such as Khama's decree, c. 1900, that no female might go abroad by rail without his written permission, as well as periodic complaints brought before the Native Advisory Council. Most of those who did go probably worked as domestic servants or farm laborers, while some became part of the underground economy associated with the township's shebeens. Still others found opportunity elsewhere. From 1928 the alluvial diamond deposits around Lictenburg were said to have "attracted considerable numbers not only of men, but also women and children."[64]

While the exact rate of labor migration from the Protectorate prior to the nineteen thirties remains uncertain clearly it was well above those few who appear in the statistical tables. Leonard Barnes summed up the situation as

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62. See Schapera *Migrant Labour*, pp. 64-70. Out of a 1943 sample of 4,426 Schapera found 343 or about 5% (3.6% for the BaKwena sub-sample) were away. This is probably an underestimate.

63. *Annexure to General Report (1911), part VIII*, p. 989, which also records 3,826 "Bantu" males from the Protectorate; of the women only 224, as opposed to 2,492 of the males, were in the urban areas. *Census for Union of South Africa, 1921*, p. 233, which puts the males in that year at 8,229 and also includes 1911 gender sub-totals as well as 1904 "Bantu" figures for Transvaal and the Cape showing 905 females and 3,105 males domiciled in the B.P. The 1891 Cape *Census*, pp. 78-79, listed 1,357 women out of a total of 3,759 Africans from "Bechuanaland" (ie. British Bechuanaland and the Protectorate.)

64. Ballinger & Hodgeson, p. 17; reproduced in Pim Report, p. 31.

he observed it in 1931, a year in which the demand for migrant labor was depressed:

> "Bechuanaland has even less reliable information as to the extent of labor-migration than the other territories. Natives leaving the territory are supposed to take out a pass, but in practice few of them trouble to do so. The frontiers are huge in length and easy to cross at a hundred points, so that there is, in fact, no official record of comings and goings that is anything like complete. But from the general social evidence it is plain that the country is denuded of its adult males in much the same proportion as Basutoland and Swaziland--that is to say, to the extent probably of 50 or 60 percent."[65]

Earlier, in 1903, the then Acting Resident Commissioner, Francis Panzera, while candidly admitting he had "no statistics to go upon," estimated during testimony before the Transvaal Labour Commission that perhaps a quarter of the "able-bodied" men between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five, 2,500 out of 10,000, could annually leave "Khama's country."[66] Two years later the South African Native Affairs Commission reported that of a calculated 22,206 able bodied men from throughout the entire Protectorate between fifteen and forty

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65. Barnes, pp. 134-135.

66. *CD.1897- 1904: Report of the Transvaal Labour Commission*, pp. 226-31: Panzera's testimony is somewhat confused, while he was tenacious with his figure of 2,500 he was initially unclear as to whether he meant it to be an approximation of actual or potential migration as well as whether or not it should apply to the whole territory before, p. 229, limiting it to Gammangwato only. Also, p. 193, a Wenela agent, Goodyear, stated that he was able to recruit 600 BaNgwato for the Rand mines and believed that just over 8,000 Bechuanaland residents could become available for work there in addition to the estimated 6,000 employed at the Diamond Fields. Actual Wenela recruitment in 1903 was 2,730- Schapera, *Migrant Labour*, p. 225. NB- a sizable number of BaTswana at any given time were not considered "able bodied" by recruiters, the Pim Report, p. 31, notes that in 1932 1/3 of all BaKwena who sought contracts with the NRC were rejected.

years of age, some 15,000 "sought labor," of which only 2,000 found work inside the territory.[67] On the other hand 1904 census data shows the Protectorate as the birthplace of 4,000 "Bantu" residents of the Transvaal and Cape while the 1911 and 1921 Union censuses show, respectively, 5,020 and 11,959 so domiciled.[68]

While the accuracy of each the above calculations is open to question if taken together with the observations of missionaries and others, as well as other available statistics, they, nonetheless, indicate that the flow of workers from the southern half of the Protectorate, and such northern areas as Bukalanga, during the first third of the century may have been proportionally similar to that of its second third.[69] One difference that may exist between the two periods is the possibility that the earlier generation of Protectorate workers, like those from within South Africa proper, were able to shun underground work at the goldmines. Existing evidence on migration, as well as the the Protectorate's balance of trade within the South African Customs Union, calls into question the recent assertion "that one cannot really project back Botswana's status as a classic under-developed labor reserve for the South African economy along Transkei-Lesotho lines too much before the 1930's."[70] This "revisionist" assumption is far too sweeping in its generalization, although it is undoubtedly true that cattle wealth, especially in

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67. *Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission, 1903-05* (Cape Times Ltd., Govt. Printers, Cape Town 1905) annexure #8. In his earlier testimony Panzera also estimated local employment at 2,000, half of whom being the BaSarwa working for Ghanzi farmers.

68. *Census of the Union of South Africa, 1921*, p. 233.

69. Pim Report, p. 32, in 1933 noted this southern bias concluding that: "It is not possible to give an estimate of any value of the proportion of adult males who are abroad, on average. It is undoubtedly a high one in the southern part of the Protectorate, but much smaller in the north."

70. J. Denbow, D. Kiyaga Mulindwa and N. Parsons, p. 4.

Ngamiland and Gammangwato, allowed owners of large herds to maintain local patterns of accumulation, which may have retarded the consolidation of dependency on migrant labor in certain areas.[71] It is also true that in some areas cash cropping, particularly during and immediately after the second Anglo-Boer War when high produce prices coincided with adequate rainfall, and other internal pursuits such as wood cutting provided, for the most part transitory, sources of income.[72] Otherwise much of the Protectorate had become substantially incorporated into a system of migrant-labor before 1930.

For Kweneng, despite the continued existence of local trade in game products and livestock, dependency on migrant labor in the early 1920s was substantial. Clissold, writing c. 1925, observed "nearly all the men go to work for periods of 6 to 12 months from time to time as the need for hut-tax arises."[73] His further observation that the Kimberly mines, which did not recruit labor, were more popular than those of the Rand helps to establish a context for evaluating the

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71. For Gammangwato- Neil Parsons "Economic History of Khama's Country, 1844-1930." For Ngamiland- Andrew Murray "The Northwest" in Morton & Ramsay, pp. 110-22. Also BNA DC Mol 2/30: "Bechuanaland Protectorate Census 1921" shows 17,466 in GaNgwaketse possessing an estimated 16,866 cattle while 17,446 in Ngamiland possess an estimated 103,989 cattle. Other figures which should not be taken at face value but which are suggestive of regional patterns of distribution: Gammangwato 56,047 w/180,608; Gamalete 4,578 w/4,292; Tlokweng 1,199 w/3,912; Kgatleng 11,604 w/4,292 cattle (the Kweneng herd was put at 23,727 but its population figure, 11,162, is entirely inconsistent with all other censuses which show Kweneng's population to be almost double that of Kgatleng.)

72. The wartime boom in local food production is reflected in Wilson & Perrot, pp. 293-97 "Bechuanaland District Committee of L.M.S. to Governor, 1903." LMS station reports from Molepolole and Kanye, however, indicate that, except for 1901, adverse agricultural conditions generally persisted until 1904: see, in particular, Lloyd, Jan. 23, 1904.

73. Clissold, p. 80.

surviving statistics for the local mine recruitement, which show 564 contracts for 1919 and 861 for 1924.[74] Another indicator of the the importance of labor migration was the practice, begun by 1898, of regularly sending royal representatives to locations within South Africa to look into the affairs of and, after 1899, collect taxes from, the BaKwena living there.[75] In 1927 the local Resident Magistrate noted the necessity of this practice given the "comparatively large number of BaKwena residing there in various employments."[76] Earlier, in 1911, Sechele II petitioned the colonial government for the establishment of an agricultural school in his reserve by noting that: "There are many boys always going to the Gold and Diamond Mines instead of which some of them should be taught at home."[77]

By the early decades of the twentieth century, labor migration had begun to exert an influence on the socio-political development of the BaKwena. One measure of its profound impact is evidence that all levels of SeKwena society participated in it. Individual cases of the sons of the royalty and the diKgosana, such as those Sebele II, Mosarwa Sechele, and Gokatweng Gayalashwe already cited, spending much of their youth in outside employment appears to have been fairly typical of a broader pattern of elite inclusion found

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74. Clissold, p. 80. BNA DCMol. 2/9, "Annual Reports." Ellenberger Diary, Sept. 21, 1898 also notes that Kebohula spoke of 160 BaKwena at Rand mines who had been recruited by the labor agent Poultney. WCW/SO 751, Willoughby notes notes that BaKwena who did go to the Rand, c. 1903, tended to congregate at North Randfontein, the BaNgwaketse at Robinson Deep, and the BaLete at South Randfontein.

75. Ellenberger Diary, Sept. 21, 1898. BNA SOC: Sebele to Poultney, June 30, and Sept. 15, 1908; to Manager of Gelden?? Co., July 23, 1908; to Manager Jumpers Reef Mine, Sept. 15, 1908.

76. BNA DCMol. 2/9 "Annual Report, 1927."

77. BNA S 43/2, Sechele II to ARC, Sept. 8, 1911.

throughout much of the southern Protectorate.[78] Among the BaKwena such migration coincided with an evident decline in the relative fortunes of many families whose genealogies bestowed high status. In this respect it is notable that, with the exception of the incumbent diKgosi, themselves, who had access to royal prerequisites, none of the paternal descendents of Sechele is known to have prospered during the decades following rinderpest. This lack of wealth compromised the capacity of Sebele I's junior sons, Kebohula, Moiteelasilo, and Tidi, in fulfilling their responsibilities as "regents" during the reign of their brother, Sechele II, and nephew, Sebele II.[79] On the other hand their cousins Baanami and Jakoba, the surviving sons of Sebele I's sibling rival Kgari, returned to Kweneng after a period of exile with their social status intact but little in the way of property.[80] The third surviving male branch of the Sechele lineage was, by the time of Sechele II's reign, led by the often absent Wabararo Motsatsi. In 1928 he, as leader of the Maratakgosi regiment and Kgosana of the Masilwana ward, left his job as a policeman on the Rand mines in order to serve on the BaKwena Tribal Council, only find himself quickly in debt and charged with

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78. See Schapera *Migrant Labour*, p. 42, who notes such inclusion among the BaKgatla, BaLete and BaTlokwa as well as BaKwena but states that in Gangwaketse as well as Gammangwato and Ngamiland "hardly any prominent members of the ruling dynasty have been abroad to work." Sebele II worked for five years as a clerk at the Rand mines before joining the SANLC.

79. See references in BNA S. 25/4; S. 25/10; S. 23/4; S. 23/5; & S. 23/6. Also 2DCMol/10, which shows that they had civil cases brought against them for unpaid debt during the early 1920s. LMS Lewis, Jan. 21, 1904, blamed Sebele I for the destitute condition of his first wife and her children, Kealeboga/Sechele II and Kebohula. But Resident Commissioner Rey, in S. 225/1, was of the opinion that Moiteelasilo was "well to do though pleading poverty." Also interview w/Moipisi Kemreile, Aug. 19, 1985; and Victoria Namane, March 31, 1986.

80. BNA S 25/10 Willoughby to RC, Nov. 14, 1918; and S 601/14.

tax default when his expected salary as a councilor failed to materialize.[81] Records of criminal and civil cases before the district court indicate that Wabararo's fate was shared by a considerable number of the local notables during the early 1920s.[82] Even earlier, in 1916, the BaKwena Kgotla was unable to impose a fine on Kgosidintsi's principal heir Baruti, then the Kgosana of Mokgalo ward and the leader of the Matlolakgang regiment, because of his lack of property.[83] During the early twentieth century the other descendents of Kgosidintsi also appear to have been of modest means with the exception of the senior son of his second house, Motswakhumo, who succeeded in in building up a large herd at Lentswe-le-Tau, and Dikgaka or David Kgosidintsi who, through royal patronage, was educated at Lovedale.[84]

Leading families in the outlying villages also experienced material decline. A notable example is the Pule dynasty of Gabane, then the second largest Kweneng community after Molepolole. In 1891-92 Pule Kobuane was given permission by Sebele to establish the settlement (as a *moratswane*) with some three thousand followers, after the British confirmed his

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81. BNA S. 23/6/1 "Meeting of the four Bakwena Councilors in R.M.'s office on 26 July, 1928." (BaKwena Tribal Council discussed more fully in chapter 5.)

82. 2DCMol/10 & /13.

83. BNA S 25/10 ARM to Act. GS, Aug. 8, 1916. Also AC 6/13 Baruti to AC(S), Dec. 1, 1904 indicating earlier problems w/debts; and WCW/SO 382 "Molepolole at the end of 1916," wherein Baruti is described as a "waster."

84. Interviews w/Mokgothu Kgabo, Aug. 14, 1985; M.P. Pheto, Aug. 27, 1985; S.G. Masimega, Jan. 21, 1986; and Felix Kgosidintsi, April 1, 1986. BNA S 23/5 & S 25/10, Willoughby to Garraway, Nov. 14, 1916. Also WCW 739 "Kgosidintsi geneology." Duggan *Southern African Agriculture*, pp. 93-96.

rival, Ikaneng Mokgosi's, right to the Balete *bogosi*.[85] Although a "little elephant" in his land of exile, Pule, with a large proportion of the Balete cattle and subjects, could credibly rubber stamp his correspondence with the title of "Kgosi e kgolo." But in the wake of rinderpest the fortunes of his family suffered with the result that both of the sons of the Pretender's first house, Masokwane and Kgosinoka, were reduced to spending much of their lives engaged in migrant labor, with the former on at least one occasion being jailed for desertion.[86] This circumstance undoubtedly contributed to the two siblings subsequent inability to maintain their *bogosi*. Among the the BaHurutshe at Mmankgodi widespread labor migration also coincided with a decline in the local authority of the ruling house of Thobega during the regency of Masenga II (1922-28.)[87] Royal weakness was clearly in evidence even earlier, in 1908, when Masenga's predecessor, Letlole, lost control over his kgotla and community to the millenarian prophet Sentso Legong.[88]

On the other end of the social spectrum, it is apparent that by the nineteen twenties many BaKgalagadi and BaSarwa were also leaving the country for wage labor. In 1929 the Molepolole magistrate noted the popularity of the Premier Diamond Mine's three month contracts: "many Bakgalagadi and

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85. Interviews w/Regent Pule, Aug. 29, 1985; Kgosi Kobuane, Monte Mokgosi, and Tshibidu Masokwane, Sept. 2, 1985. V. Ellenberger "DiRobaroba Matlhakola-tsa ga Mashodi-a-Mphele." Pule's father Kobuane was the heir of Poo the elder brother of Mokgosi father of Ikaneng. Ikaneng's party, however, maintained that Poo renounced his lineage's rights when he allowed Mokgosi to rule in his place.

86. BNA S. 282/6, DC Mol 4/8 and 2DC Mol/13: showing convictions of Tax default, and assault as well as breach of contract against Masokwane. Also DC Mol 6/8 Memo by RM to Police Inspector, n.d. c. 1929. DC Mol. 6/6 RM to ARC, Nov. 20, 1929.

87. BNA DC Mol 5/11. Interview w/Kobedi Seribe, Aug. 5, 1985.

88. For Sentso see chapter 5. WCW/SO 738, Letlole also had a rubber stamp: "Kgosi e Kgolo ea Bahurutse Mangodi"

even Masarwa from the Kalahari portion of the Bakwena Reserve have been coming to be recruited."[89] Partially as a result of this development the government at the time believed that the breakdown of hereditary servitude was further advanced in Kweneng than in the Ghanzi farms as well as a number of other Reserves.[90] Earlier Sebele I had boasted of rising material condition of his BaKgalagadi who, having been at least partially freed from the servile obligations to their former masters, had acquired the same tribute and tax obligations as well as property rights of BaTswana.[91] But this process was both evolutionary and constrained by a number of factors such as the resiliency of the market for local karosses, many of which were still collected as *sehuba* tribute even after the practice was outlawed in 1934.[92] The extent of this demand is suggested by the 1929 Annual Report for Molepolole in which it is reported that between five and six hundred individuals sewed 17,911 lbs. of skins with an export value of £ 4,212.[93] There was also a heightened desire on the part of some migrants to maintain servants as herders at a time when

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89. BNA DCMol. 2/9, "Annual report for 1929", also S 47/1, RMol. to RC, Dec. 28, 1929.

90. BNA S. 47/1 RC to HC, Dec. 31, 1929. Also S. 43/7 RMol to GS, Nov. 21, 1928 etc. S. 47/6 "Report of Personal Services to which the Chief is entitled under Sekwena Law." DCMol 5/7. Clissold, p. 24: "the fact that it is now easy for a serf to go to the mines, or run into the desert, if he is dissatisfied has led them (i.e. their BaKwena masters) to be more considerate."

91. BNA RC 5/12 Sebele to AC(S), Aug. 30, 1900 and to Act.AC(S), Sept. 5, 1900.

92. Ellenberger Diary, March 24, 1897. BNA S 47/6 "Report on Personal Servces which the Chief is entitled under SeKwena Law." S 426/14 "Sehuba in Kweneng." Interviews w/M.P. Pheto, Aug. 28, 1985; Ratlou Sebetlela Ketsabile, Oct. 8, 1985; S.G. Masimega, April 1, 1986; and Eyes Rekoeng, May 6, 1987. Clissold, pp. 24-26. Mautle, pp. 26-27. See also works of Moeng and Okihiro. Tribute payment by BaKgalagadi and BaSarwa of in the central Kgalagadi Crownlands to Sebele II- DC Mol. 5/13, 5/16, 5/18, and 6/1, also S 46/1.

93. BNA DC Mol. 2/9 "Annual Report, 1929."

livestock constituted the principal form of investment for any surplus remittences.

As the rise of labor migration transformed the Kweneng into a labor reserve its social order continued to be ranked according to the governing hierarchy of kgotla that had been established under Sechele. In 1943, an anthropology student, B.J. van Niekerk, was surprized to discover this fact which led him to characterize the "SeKwena administrative structure" as being of "historic" as opposed to "traditional" origin.[94] In his enthusiasm for his finding, van Niekerk observed that Sechele's apparent appreciation of the "value of a distribution of responsibility" was "a valuable precedent to bear in mind in the intricate problems arising out of indirect rule." A possible explanation for the continuity of SeKwena administrative structure into the colonial period is that the British through their system of "parallel" or "indirect rule" had in effect frozen it according to its immediate pre-colonial pattern. Labor reserves, moreover, besides subsidizing the reproduction of an exploited work force, also have served to suppress the growth of a unifying proletarian and/or nationalist consciousness by reinforcing countervailing "traditional" aspects of "tribal" life. There is evidence of such intent. In 1923 the Resident Commissioner, in response to imperial concerns about Garvyism, wrote: "There is no evidence of the existence, let alone progress, of Pan-Africanism in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, and I do not expect that there will be any so long as the tribal system is maintained."[95]

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94. BNA S 471/3: B.J. van Niekerk "Brief report on investigations carried out under the Bakwena, June-July 1940" and "Additional report on the enquiries carried out under the Bakwena, October, 1943" w/annotations & minutes by B.P. administrators.

95. BNA S 8/3, RC (James Macgregor) to HC, March 20, 1923. A month later reports began to emerge that the Garvyism was indeed being spread in Ngamiland and Ghanzi: Edwin Wilmsen *Land Filled with Flies*, p. 151 (citing BNA S 5/1.)

But, beyond assuming a willingness on the part of reserve residents to accept a "false conciousness," any interpretation that holds that the survival of "tribal politics" was simply the product of divide and rule tactics fails to adequately account for the historically dynamic nature of colonialism in Kweneng. As it was, those officials who read van Niekerk's reports were for the most part interested in his intelligence about the persistence of proscribed practices. Rather than stagnating as an imposed model of social control, Indirect Rule had by then developed into an arena of conflict as well as collaboration between the imperial superstructure and its SeKwena sub-structure. There is therefore a need to incorporate into any analysis of the reserve's underdevelopment an understanding of how manifestations of structural continuity within it coexisted with, and allowed for, alterations in the meaning and function of local institutional arrangements.

Given their intermediary position at the juncture between imperial authority and their subjects, the diKgosi were positioned to play a positive role at the close of the nineteenth century. The last decade of Sebele's reign, 1901 to 1911, can be seen as an example of this progressive potential. But in the immediate aftermath of rinderpest his conduct did not do credit to either himself or his *bogosi*. According to by then well established SeTswana norms he was expected to at least attempt to act as a provider to the needy among his subjects. This meant that in times of general hardship his granaries, accumulated through the *masotla* fields and *dikgafela*, as well as herds were expected to serve a social

safety net for the community.[96] As it was, the Kgosi, following the destruction of his herd, left his people to fend for themselves, while he retreated for several months to one of his cattleposts in the company of his mistress, Baultwe, and a case of brandy.[97] In response to the instability resulting from this desertion Khama, in November of 1896, sent his son Sekgoma to warn Sebele that he viewed his conduct as a challenge to their good relations.[98] Rather than being dismissed as a presumptuous move on the part of a recent foe this intervention had a salutory effect. A *pitso* was held in which Bathoen, who had been summoned by Sebele, and Sekgoma joined the assembled BaKwena in remonstrating their ruler for his Pilate like behaviour. Once more the grandson of Motswasele II was warned that his subjects had the capacity to remove him. Thereafter the chastened Kgosi returned to his kgotla where he began to devote himself to his responsibilities.

Sebele never regained his herds. Although the Kweneng's livestock population recovered much if not all of its former size during the early decades of the twentieth century, those in the possession of its diKgosi remained modest. In 1932 it was determined that Sebele's grandson, Sebele II, had a total of 521 cattle, including 253 uninherited "personal" cattle, which he claimed to have accumulated from his earnings at

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96. Schapera *Tswana Law and Custom*, pp. 68-69. Early testimony of such ideals among the BaKwena can be found in Kgabo Tebele's commentary of the praises of Kgosi Motshodi in WCW/SO 739. Also interviews w/O. Segakisa, Aug. 27; Samson Gower; M.B Pheto; and Mhiemang, Aug. 28; S.G. Masimega, Sept. 19; Majaasuma Matlhabani, Oct. 11, 1985; S.G. Masimega (2), Jan. 13, 1986; and Motlhodong, May 7, 1987 on *masotla*, *dikgafela*, and *matimela* all of whom confirm the persistence of such principals among the BaKwena in the twentieth century while noting divergences in actual practice.

97. LMS H. Williams, June 5, & Oct. 12, 1896.

98. LMS H. Williams, Dec. 20, 1896.

Johannesburg.[99] The decline of the royal herd, as well as evidence of leaner circumstance among other members of the social elite, suggests that prior to c. 1930 the trend in the Kweneng, like that in the Gangwaketse, was probably towards a more diffuse, though by no means egalitarian, distribution of ownership. In the latter reserve this process resulted from a combination of recurring drought and the capacity of migrants to accumulate stock independent of either their fathers or elder brothers that, taken together, resulted, between 1914 and 1933, in a pattern in which it is said that the stock holdings of the larger owners declined by some fifty percent while the total number of cattle remained about the same.[100] This historic pattern stands in contrast with the assumption that droughts, by rendering smaller herds unsustainable, have inevitably led to greater concentrations of cattle wealth in Botswana.[101]

Although cattle losses weakened the system of tying the junior kgotla of Kgosing to *bogosi* through *mafisa*, the BaKwena monarchs were compensated through the aquisition of new sources of income. Among these was the commission that the British rebated to their "principal Chiefs" for their

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99. BNA S 225/8, Act. ARM to GS, May 21, 1932: 253 "personal" under 19 herds and 268 "inherited" under 31 herds. This figure is supported by Eyes Rekoeng, interviewed May 6, 1987. Sebele II, Act. ARM to ARC, Jan. 13, 1932, however, claimed his herd was between 800-900. On source of Sebele II's herd- DCMol. 5/21, Memo by Stigand, Oct. 12, 1928. Also DCMol 2/31-32, noting that his livestock holdings were insufficient to pay off his debts in 1921-22. S. 23/3, RC to HC, Aug. 6, 1921: "He (Sebele II) dissipated his patrimony, never large, through riotous living." and D.C. Mol. 2/2 on 1919 division of Sechele II's cattle between his son, Sebele II, and his junior wife, Lena Rauwe.

100. Pim Report, pp. 25-27, based on "two memoranda on the cattle position in the Bangwaketsi reserve by R. Rowland."

101. See Paul Devitt "Drought and Poverty" in Mandalon Hinchey (edit.) *Symposium on Drought in Botswana* (Botswana Society/Clark Univ. Press, 1979), pp. 121-27.

collection of the Hut Tax. Initially this commission was an automatic ten percent of any revenue received but, from 1916 the government adopted a policy of lowering the percentage for taxes judged to be late or in arrears as an incentive for more efficient collection.[102] Sebele's commission for 1904 was reported to have been £ 101.[103] In subsequent years this figure rose modestly despite increases in the tax rate and steady imperial pressure for stricter enforcement. Thus for 1929/30 the commission was estimated at only £ 369, out of which £ 147 was deducted to pay for the services of the actual collectors.[104]

The Hut Tax only accounted for a fraction of the income of due *bogosi*. Prior to 1934, the British South Africa Company and its Secheleland Concession paid the BaKwena diKgosi an annual amount totaling £ 405.[105] They also annually received Stand Rents at a rate of £ 15 (later £ 16) per annum for general dealers and £ 5 per annum for blacksmiths, bakers, butchers, and well sinkers.[106] In 1904 these rents came to £ 135. Due to the colonial government's policy of restricting the number of trading licences, as well as the depressed nature of the local economy, this revenue figure remained, for many decades, relatively stable rising to £ 205 by 1928.[107]

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102. BNA S 25/3, GS circular of Nov. 16, 1916 w/related correspondence and followup through 1928. This policy was not applied to the Bamangwato Reserve where Khama's arrears were considered small.

103. BNA RC 12/16, AC(South) to RC, March 31, 1905, on sources of Chiefly income, During the same period Khama earned £ 550, Bathoen £ 120, Linchwe £ 108, Mokgosi £ 57, and Sekgoma Letsholathebe £ 42 in Hut Tax commissions.

104. Table in BNA S. 23/6/1.

105. BNA S. 290/16-20: In 1934 the conncession was cancelled but the BaKwena continued to be receive an annual payment of £ 225 in compensation.

106. Early history of Stand Rents in Kweneng detailed in BNA S 261/1/1, RMol. (Stigand) to ARC, March , 10 1930, w/followups.

107. BNA S 23/6/2, Minutes of Bakwena Councilors, June 29,

Along with the other diKgosi of the southern Protectorate, the BaKwena rulers also received a so-called *setlhako* ("sandal/shoe") payment of £ 1 from each returning labor migrant. As noted local hunters were also still liable to pay various forms of *sehuba*. Although many undoubtedly resisted meeting their full obligations, the continuing contribution of this latter tribute to *bogosi* is indicated in the surviving 1908 correspondence between Sebele and F. Jacobs of Mafikeng. This shows the former earning at least £ 41 for the sale of 284 fox, jackal, and civet skins while offering for sale additional game products including bundles of ostrich feathers, starting at 10 shillings per pound, and leopard skins, at 30 shillings a piece.[108] These sales probably only respresented surpluses that could not find a market with regular, Molepolole based, buyers. The diKgosi could also enrich themselves through court fines and the impoundment of stray, *matimela*, stock which ideally were to be devoted to public purposes. In justification of this prerogative Sebele I wrote with apparent candor: "Eating up is the only physical force which a chief has at his command to keep his people in order; and although often abused for political purposes, it is absolutely necessary as being the only means he has of commanding obedience to the law."[109]

Still another major source of income was the royalty of £ 1 paid on each wagonload of timber cut in the reserve.[110]

1928. In 1932, DC Mol 2/18, "Salary for Kgari Sechele," it totalled only £ 189 but by 1960, S 479/1/8, the figure had risen to £ 650.

108. BNA SOC, Sebele to F. Jacobs, June 6, 11, 20, July 13, and Sept. 9, 1908. These prices are essentially in line w/Okihiro, p. 103, "Kabelo's Trade Profits, c. 1910."

109. BNA SOC, Sebele to Act.AC(S) n.d. (Aug.-Sept. 1908.)

110. PRO 879/78/702 RC to HC, Oct 7, and HC to RC, Nov. 8, 1902; 879/81/717 HC to SS, Dec. 15, 1902, w/enclosures; and 879/91/802 SS to HC, March 2, 1906, and HC to SS, July 2, 1906 w/enclosures. Additional references in BNA SOC 1904-08 and AC 6/13.

This fee was remitted by the buyers who were also forced to use local labor for cutting and transport. In 1902, as a result of high wartime demand, £ 1,182 was thus received from two lumber agents for the export of approximately 73,000 poles. At the behest of the new Resident Commissioner, Ralph Williams, Sebele agreed to retain only one third of this windfall, banking the balance into a newly created "Bakwena Tribal Fund."

The diKgosi were able to profit in other ways. In 1903 Sebele was paid £ 14 by the British for the construction of housing at the new Police Camp.[111] He and his successors, like all BaTswana rulers, also received all manner of "gifts" from individuals, most especially outsiders wishing to hunt or conduct business in their domain. In this Sebele could be quite shameless (to a local trader): "Glad to hear that you were now going to be married with a rich young lady. So I shall be glad to receive a good present from you and your wife- I now wish you both to live a happy and contented life and be multiplied and replenish the earth."[112] A few presents, such as Venela agent Goodyear's donation of a typewriter for Sebele's "Bakwena National Office," served the public.[113] Most were simply personal bribes. As long as this corruption remained relatively unostentatious it was tolerated by the Kgosi's colonial superiors as well as apparently most, but not all, of his subjects. The BaKwena diKgosi may have also benefited from other dubious sources of income. One sensational allegation occured in 1922 when it was reported

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111. BNA RC 15/16/2. The largest house, which Sebele agreed to build "exactly similar to his own" for £ 8, has been designated as the site for the Sechele I Museum. This building, however, was altered and extended in subsequent years.

112. BNA SOC Sebele to Adolph Hirschfeldt, June 3, 1908. This letter was sent to "Kurland" (Latvia) in response to a letter dated May 14, 1908!

113. BNA SOC Sebele to Goodyear, Aug. 5, 1908.

that Sebele II had in his possession "a cup 3/4 full of diamonds" which he was then trying to sell.[114] Subsequent investigation apparently failed to substantiate this intriguing intelligence.

The existence of influence peddling on the part of the diKgosi coincided with the formal transfer of their role as trade regulators to the higher ranks of colonial officialdom. In keeping with this dispensation the diKgosi were barred, after 1916, from competing with the European or Asian owned commercial establishments within their reserves. Thus in 1926 Sebele II was forbidden from opening a butchery/eating house.[115] This ban on royal shopkeeping was part of a broader de facto prohibition against the issuance of trading licences and, from 1923, a de jure denial of credit to potential African entrepreneurs of any sort.[116] This policy, implemented in the face of sustained African opposition, remained essentially unchanged under the British.[117]

Despite, or perhaps in spite, of the restrictions against African trading there is evidence for the existence of a considerable amount of collusion between various diKgosi and traders throughout the colonial period. Among the BaKwena Sebele I's close ties with Henry Boyne and Richard "Kotwane"

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114. BNA S 10/2/1 Ivon Fry to T.M. Davidson, Chief Diamond Detective- South Africa Police, April 9, 1922 w/followup correespondence.

115. BNA DC Mol. 5/2. This policy arose in the aftermath of Khama III's controversial stake in a trading company: see N. Parsons "'Khama & Co.' and the Jousse Trouble, 1910-1916," in *Journal of African History*, vol. 16, 1975, pp. 383-408.

116. Some local Europeans wanted to the colonial administration to go much further and ban all Africans from even assuming "managerial positions in shops," BNA S 20/3 Petition of Ngamiland Traders, Sept. 22, 1921, but such legislation was rejected.

117. BNA S 445/4-6 "Trading by Natives."

Transfeldt were well known and, in 1899, became the subject of censure by members of the Kgosidintsi and Tebele families.[118] His immediate successors, Sechele II and his son Sebele II, are also alleged to have cultivated special relationships with a number of figures but most especially with Max "Raphalane" Hirschfeldt.[119] Suspicious colonial officials believed that Raphalane's influence could in part be attributed to his willingness to give large amounts of credit to the diKgosi and other leading BaKwena and indeed Sebele II owed him at least L 600 in 1920 and L 184 in 1932.[120] But it was also alleged that "many traders allowed Sebele (II) goods on credit because they feared a refusal would result in some boycott of trade."[121]

While it is obvious that interelationship between various diKgosi and their traders were governed by mutual opportunism and self-interest, there is also evidence of the importance of other factors. A 1911 petition that aimed to eliminate various practices by Kweneng's trading community, praised Raphalane for his practice of offering cash, as opposed to "goodfors," in his purchases.[122] As the leading producer and exporter of karosses he was also the reserve's largest local employer. He thus provided an alternative to migrancy for some and local wage labor between contracts for others. In this respect a parallel can be drawn to Hirschfeldt's royal ties and the

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118. PRO CO 879/57/574: Letter by Kgosidintsi and others to AC, Jan. 3, 1899.

119. See A. Stigand's correspondence on the "Hidden Hand" in BNA S 23/4. Also S 43/2, S 293/1/1, AC 6/13, D.C. Mol. 2/10, 2/24, 2/31-32, and 5/12. Interviews w/Peloentle Dihutso, Oct. 7, 1985, Ratlou Sebetlela, Oct. 8, 1985, and Kebotse Raeiila, Nov. 1, 1985. Okihiro, p. 107. Max's Molepolole career lasted from 1899 to 1935; he began to compete against his brother Adolph "Ranko" Hirschfeldt in Feb. of 1907.

120. BNA DCMol. 2/31: GS to ARMol. March 23, 1920, his other major creditor at the time being Transfeldt whom he owed L 848. S 225/8: RMol. to RM Gab., July 10, 1932.

121. BNA S 225/8 RMol. to GS, Sept. 8, 1931.

122. BNA S 43/2, Sechele II to ARC, Sept. 8, 1911.

somewhat similar special relationship that existed between the BaNgwaketse monarchs and Richard Rowland at about the same time.[123]

Rowland, like Raphalane, but on a somewhat grander scale, sought to profit through the promotion of local production, most notably through his water projects and the development of the asbestos mine at Moshaneng. Another similarity between the two was that they were both often the targets of suspicion and hostility on the part of various colonial officials. Some of this hostility was a product of racism. Rowland was, himself, a "half caste," while both Hirschfeldt brothers, as well as many other traders and artisans in the region, married BaTswana.[124] Other cases of intermarriage in Kweneng included such locally prominent surnames as Boyne, Gower, Jansen, Khan, Kablay, Lottering, and van Vuren. By the 1930s this relatively high number of interracial marriages, coupled with the residence of additional mixed race families, namely the Brills, Januarys, Ockhuizens, Steyns, and (some of the) Hornes, had fueled concerns within the colonial government about "miscegenation," "Undesirable Europeans," and

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123. BNA S 415/5 "Chief Seepapitso Bathoen Gaseitsiwe." RC 14/3 "Official Papers of C.F. Rey, 1929-35"- "Tour of Bangwaketse Reserve, Aug. 1933." S 10/2/1- Correspondence on Balkis mine. *Mafeking Mail*, March 12, 1945 (obit.) Interviews w/M. Rowland, July 25, 1985, B.S. Gaseitsiwe, Oct. 7, 1986. Rowland's Kanye career lasted from 1912 to 1943, during which he was the longterm employer of Joni Masire, the President's father.

124. Rowland and A. Hirschfeldt seem to have left estranged wives back in, respectively, England and Latvia, but nonetheless willed most of their property to their local heirs: BNA C/8/734 no. 510 "Estate of Late A. Hirschfeldt," will dated Jan. 11, 1941. Sir Charles Rey *Monarch of All I Survey, Bechuanaland Daries, 1929-37* (hereafter referred to as Rey Diary) edited by M. Crowder & N. Parsons (Botswana Society/Lilian Barber Press/James Currey, 1988)(Original M.S. located at the National Museum, Gaberone) p. 74. Interview w/M. Rowland, July 25, 1985.

the "Coloured" factor in local commerce and society.[125] This prejudice was shared by other influential elements; a 1939 "Report on Education of Europeans in the Bechuanaland Protectorate" by a Dr. E.G. Malherb, Director of the National Bureau of Educational and Social Research for the Union of South Africa, noted:

> "Dealing with the question of race mixture first, I feel that the problem should be tackled immediately. I am not referring to isolated cases here and there which seem to be unaviodable, but I have in mind particularly the situation at Molepolole where practically the whole European community is involved. The situation there is both serious and difficult. The seriousness lies in the fact that the people with a touch of coloured blood are respectable and on practically the same economic level as Europeans.'[126]

Within the Administration biases against mixed race entrepeneurs sometimes dovetailed with suspicions about Asians and Jews:

> "In my minute M. 391 of this date, I referred to the 'Hidden Hand' behind Sebele and his secretary Mocumi in this clearly formented agitation against me on the part of the Chief and his particular followers. I have clear reason to believe that the alien Kurland Jew storekeeper Max L. Hirschfeldt is at the bottom of it in collaboration with the Greek Jew Joseph Zakar, recently licensed as Labour Agent for Hadleys."'[127]

> "there is good reason to suspect illicit liquor is being smuggled to Gabane by Indians via Moshupa and Ramoutsa from the South. It is a known fact that Sebele has been constantly visiting Gabane and it is widely rumored that he goes there to meet

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125. For Government concern see- BNA S 352/9-18 "Undesirable Europeans in Native Reserves" (S 352/9, 15, 17, specific to Molepolole), S 242/5-8 "Miscegenation," S 298/2-3 "Immorality Law for B.P., Proposed Proclamation."

126. BNA S 144/17 "Malherb Report," p. 12.

127. BNA S 23/4 (Confidential) RMol. (A. Stigand) to ARC, July 2, 1926.

> liquor smugglers. The Indian A.G. Dada who has a Gen. Trader's licence at Kopong and who is constantly travelling in his lorry between Kopong, Gabane, Moshupa etc. upon the ostensible excuse of delivering grain and goods bought by his far flung customers from his Kopong store, Sergt. Evans and I are inclined to suspect to be in cooperation with other "coolies" at Moshupa and Ramoutsa."[128]

A number of additional implications can be drawn from the nature of royal revenues during the first three decades of the century. The relatively low contribution of the Hut Tax commission to the BaKwena diKgosi's overall income, for instance, suggests they could afford to be less than energetic collectors. Indeed, one finds that in 1904 Sebele received a slightly smaller commission than his neighbor Linchwe, despite the fact that his reserve must have contained roughly twice as many inhabitants. His two immediate successors, Sechele II and Sebele II, were often tolerant of defaulters. The 1921/22 Molpolole Annual Report, for example, notes: "the Chief is useless as regards helping the Administration to get in the Tax- he contents himself to telling the people to pay and leaving it at that....It is obvious that the headmen assist the defaulters to conceal themselves."[129] Despite similar complaints from elsewhere the colonial regime had little choice but to rely on its Chiefs. In response to proposals that he assume direct responsibility for the collecting outstanding taxes the Molepolole Magistrate, in 1917, protested: "I have no staff to deal with it myself in the place of the Chief's headmen, and I am afraid that a deficit will result if the books were handed over."[130]

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128. BNA DCMol. 6/8: 1926 Report by Stigand to Inspector of Police.
129. BNA DC Mol. 2/9.
130. BNA S 25/3 ARMol. to Financial Secretary, Sept. 25, 1917.

Thus rather than simply coopting them as colonial agents, the Chief's responsibility over tax collection provided them with a source of potential leverage within the imperial system. With other sources of personal income at their disposal, the diKgosi of the larger Native Reserves were less dependent than the British establishment on their share of the Hut Tax revenues. In addition, control over tax collection furnished the rulers with a new source of local patronage, in terms of both turning a blind eye to defaulters, and sharing out collection.

During the last decade of his reign Sebele I's annual income, by conservative estimation, must have approached some £ 1,000. By contrast, the, relatively high, African wages at the Diamond mines in 1904 averaged £ 4 16/- per month while those of day laborers in Kimberley were £ 2 6/- "with food" (£ 3 6/- w/out.)[131] In the same year the highest paid teacher in Molepolole, who had passed Standard 6 at Lovedale, received an annual salary of only £ 20.[132] This gap in wealth, during a period of general impoverishment, resulted in the diKgosi becoming the focus of envy in certain quarters, most especially among their relatives and other members of the social elite. On a number of occasions, members of this latter group petitioned that "the leading headmen of the tribe" to be given a say in the distribution of "tribal monies." The boundary between public and private accumulation on the part of *bogosi*, nonetheless, remained ambiguous throughout the colonial era.

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131. *Statistical Register of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope for 1904*, pp. 245, 264.

132. LMS "Report on the LMS Schools in the Bechuanaland Protectorate" by James Barns, Dec. 14, 1904, enclosed in Willoughby, Dec. 19, 1904 (the missionary Mary Partridge, who served as headteacher, earned L 170 per annum.)

During Sebele I's reign, the growth of new sources of income for *bogasi* was accompanied by added administrative responsibilities. From his correspondence it is clear that, in addition to tax collection, he looked out for the welfare of migrant laborers by monitoring their working conditions, vetting labor recruiters, and making sure that letters and remittances reached their families. He also often involved himself in the legal affairs of his subjects when they were brought before the Magistrate's court. As a result, besides remunerating his some of his tax collectors, he found it necessary to employ a permanent "Tribal Secretary" and others to run his National Office. At times the Kgosi could avoid spending his own revenues by imposing levies for major public projects, but only with the consent of the Kgotla.

Sebele's ability to use *bogosi* as an instrument of both public state-building and private accumulation was ultimately predicated on the emergence of a modus vivendi between himself and his imperial overseers. While his 1895 negotiations in London had effectively resolved many of his initial conflicts with them, new disagreements and tensions arose. By the time of the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 allegations of disloyalty and insubordination on his part very nearly led to his removal and detention. That he was able to maintain his throne can be attributed to the creation of a new and more lasting partnership between himself, and his peers, on one hand and the reformed post-war Protectorate administration on the other, during the energetic tenure of Ralph Williams as Resident Commissioner (1901-06).

In the immediate aftermath of his return from London Sebele was on relatively good terms with the British. Evidence of cooperation between the two parties can be found in their response to the continuing, albeit much reduced, challenge of the BagaMashadi holdouts under Baanami at Kolobeng. In August

of 1896, after some of their cattle were looted, the loyalists counterattacked and slew three of the BagaMashadi at GaKgatla.[133] Following this skirmish the Kgosi received colonial backing for his order that the Baanami and his followers be exiled. This finally occured in 1898 when a couple hundred of the BagaMashadi, weakened by the plagues that had afflicted the region, embarked on a long, and for many fatal, trek to the Tati Company lands where they found temporary refuge at Ramaquabane.

In 1897, British suspicions were briefly aroused when it was alleged that Sebele, along with Bathoen, had been in contact with insurrectionists then beseiged by colonial forces at Langeberg in the (former British) Bechuanaland region of the Cape Colony.[134] Although a pair of their subjects had apparently traveled to the rebel outpost the authorities were soon convinced that the two rulers were not, themselves, involved. The brutal repression of the BaTlharo and BaTlhaping, nonetheless, aroused sentiments of anger and sympathy, but also caution, within the Protectorate. Bathoen, echoed by his kgotla, is reported to have have eulogized the rebel leader Luka Jantjie: "They have killed him, but they did so after he had fought (ba molaile empa ba molaile a kile a lwana.)" Then turning to Masilo, the ranking member of the Protectorate Native Police, he is said to have asked: "How do the whitemen fight?" The Sergeant replied: "When the Government fights no one gets the best against it; the

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133. LMS Howard Williams, July 31, and Aug. 12, 1896. PRO CO 879/47/517 Lt.Gen. Goodenough to Chamberlain, August 29, 1896 w/enclosures etc. BNA RC 2/16/1-4, RC 4/4, and PP 1/1/10: Phutegelo, Gokatweng & Basutli.

134. PRO CO 879/53/552, HC to SS, Aug. 10, w/enclosures; RC to HC, Aug. 18, w/enclosures; and HC to CO, Sept. 4, 1897. For a detailed account of the "rebellion" see Shillington, pp. 230-41.

Government always wins."[135] At about the same time, Howard Williams, in writing of the "white atrocities" then occuring south of the Molopo, concluded that among his BaKwena flock: "The name of the whiteman must stink as from the bottom of the pit."[136]

Although the fall of Langeberg, which coincided with the defeat of the first Chimerenga in Southern Rhodesia, was the last episode of "primary resistance" on the part of BaTswana, white fears of a "native uprising," periodically fanned by exaggerated stories and rumor, persisted. Thus a potentially serious situation arose, in May 1899, when Rev. A.J. Wookey informed Assistant Commissioner Surmon of a *letsholo* Sebele had held. The latter, said Wookey, told his people that, because places like Lophepe and Kang were being taken away from them, they should be prepared to die fighting the white men; thus "three mephatos of young men were to commence learning the use of the rifle, and everyone was to bring in a head of small game."[137] Sebele later strongly denied that he had in any way sought to turn his people against Her Majesty and, in vain, asked that he be allowed to confront his accusers. Goold-Adams, now the Resident Commissioner, was unconvinced: "I believe that you, Sebele, have been drinking a lot lately, I believe that at the meeting you did make use of the words stated, and that you did incite you people to rebel against the Government."[138] The Kgosi was, nonetheless, let off: "on the next occasion that anything of a similar nature occurs, you will be brought to trial, the witnesses will be produced, and if you are found guilty you will be taken away

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135. PRO CO 879/53/552, "Extract from Diary kept in Assistant Commissioners Office at Gaberones, August 5, 1897 (there were no white colonial officers at the meeting.)

136. LMS Howard Williams, Sept. 2, 1897.

137. BNA RC 3/9, also PRO CO 879/57/574, Wookey to Surmon, May 24, 1899 w/related correspondence.

138. BNA RC 3/9 (also PRO), RC to HC, June 9, 1899.

and someone else appointed probably to rule your tribe." Earlier the High Commissioner, Lord Milner, then en route to hand Kruger the ultimatum that would precipitate the second Anglo-Boer War, cabled that: "unless the case turns out very bad, I think that you should confine yourself to giving him a severe warning and not arrest him."

It is quite possible that the *letsholo* incident had transpired pretty much as it was reconstructed by Goold-Adams. Sebele did have a penchant for allowing his tongue to become incautious in its bluster. During the meeting itself he made no attempt to hide his umbrage at the boundaries that had just been demarcated for his reserve, a resentment he would, to no avail, maintain throughout the remainder of his reign. His predilliction for brandy and *khadi* is also well documented, although there is room for doubt as to whether his alchoholic consumption at this time was significantly impairing his leadership.[139]

A notable aspect of Sebele's alleged disloyalty is the identity of his accuser. Wookey's informant was Obolayaphuti, the son of Baruti Kgosidintsi. From this fact, and Baruti's own behavior, it is clear that the incident was part of an emerging dynastic conflict, which for three decades would pit most of the sons of Kgosidintsi against the heirs of Sechele. At times this competition amounted to little more than a petty melodrama. In dynastic politics, however, the bathos of royal scandals are frequently inseparable from matters of great consequence.[140]

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139. While the accounts of his, teetotaling, missionaries often imply that he was a hopeless drunkard, his own writings, as well as actions, generally convey the intelligent determination of a ruler locked in constant struggle to defend the interests of himself and his state, interests which, like a true monarch, he incidentally saw as being one and the same.

140. Sillery *The Bechuanaland Protectorate* (1952), p. n.114, chose to ignore the whole affair: "The later years of Sebele's

During the second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) the BaKwena remained loyal to MmaMosadiyana. This is true notwithstanding their agreement, in February of 1900, with the Boer commandant Peter "RaMolora" Swartz that they would not interfere with his commando if it remained east of the railway; an understanding that was consistent with their official status as non-combatants in "the white mans war."[141] In fact, Sebele's defensive preparations were credited, by local missionaries and traders, with deterring the Boers from acting on their threat to seize the stores at Molepolole. He also went out of his way to see to the personal safety of white residents during the early months of the conflict and encouraged his people to take advantage of the opportunities to supply material and labor for the British war effort. Despite this modest record of cooperation his relations with his overlords deteriorated.

In August of 1901, Sebele, alone among the major Protectorate Chiefs, was barred from participating in the great gathering of South African Chiefs at Cape Town to greet the Duke and Duchess of York.[142] In his place the government invited his heir, Kealeboga, and Baruti. More seriously by the time of this snub plans were already well advanced for the Kgosi's removal and detention, possibly at either Robben island or the Seychelles. The obstensible reason for these

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reign were clouded by troubles, as were also the times of his two successors. In order to avoid resuscitating old controversies which might cause pain to living persons, these difficulties are not described in any detail." I have simply endeavored to use disgression in choice of names and details which, nonetheless, have long been a matter of public record.

141. Boer War: LMS: Wookey Nov. 28, 1899 and May 6, 1900, Lloyd, Dec. 4, 1899. "Murder at Deerdeport," p. 16 (contemporary article found in DRC Archives, Cape Town by Fred Morton?)

142. BNA RC 5/12, (also PRO CO 879/76/694), Acting AC(S) to ARC, Aug. 13, 1901. LMS Partridge, Aug. 24, 1901. Even the karosses he sent to the royal couple were returned, though his L 10 contribution for the Victoria Memorial was accepted.

designs had nothing to do with any serious act of disloyalty, though previous conflicts had undoubtedly hardened attitudes. Neither were any crimes or even misdemeanors suspected. Sebele's predicament was the outcome of Baruti's ability to persuade members of the colonial government to intervene on behalf of his sister, the Mohumagadi-a-Magolo Gorileng, also known as MmaTsholofelo. Her status had allegedly been compromised by the Kgosi's relationship with his mistress, Baultwe or Mmathadi.

Why was Sebele's marital status turned into a topic of imperial interest? The Kgosi, himself, implied that the true question for Baruti's party, as with the earlier BagaMashadi leaders, was his enlightened policies with regards to the BaKgalagadi:

> "I wish them to pay me tribute and not to be worked like slaves (I mean prisoners of war) I wish you to know this because Bakwena will say I am taking them away; I am not taking them away, but I say they should not have their property taken from them as they are constantly complaining of this. I am not taking them away from their 'Khotlas', but I object to their being persecuted."[143]

In light of Sebele's accumulation, as well as their own material decline, it seems reasonable to suppose that continued efforts to undermine *bolata* could have motivated the opposition of Baruti and other Sons of Kgabo. But after considerable lobbying from Baruti, the Mohumagadi, herself, and the L.M.S. the then Acting Resident Commissioner, Surmon, was convinced that:

> "The quarrel was occasioned by Sebele's disregarding a custom that has been observed in the tribe for generations past, in accordance with which every husband must sleep with his own wife and every wife with her own husband, during the period

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143. BNA RC 5/12, Sebele to Surmon, Aug. 30, & Sept. 1, 1900.

> in which the first fruits of each season are being eaten, and if one of two spouses infringes this custom, the offender must call in a doctor to redress the wrong of the other. It appears that at a cattle post in January last, Sebele violated this custom by cohabitating, while the first fruits of the season were being eaten, with Mathadi, the wife of Nliko, one of his Councilors."[144]

While the Commissioner's premise may have been correct in so far as within SeKwena society the status of a Mohumagadi-a-Magolo was a public issue and marital taboos were customarily observed during the period of *dikgafela*, his actions were ham-fisted:

> "After hearing what the different speakers had to say, it appeared to me clear that the discontent in the tribe was caused by Sebele's conduct with Mathadi, and in order to bring about a reconciliation between him and the malcontents, I told him that he should separate himself entirely from Mathadi, and restore conjugal rights to his wife."

Surmon had exceeded what, in a colonial context, might have been legitimate political concern, by allowing himself to become involved in upholding the sanctity of the Mohumagadi's "Christian marriage." Sebele had, in fact, long been a polygamist anyway, having married Gorileng's sister, Ikaeng, in 1885.[145] Furthermore Baultwe, although formally the wife of the now late Mhiko Segakisa, had, with her husband's apparent

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144. PRO CO 879/68/659 Act. RC to HC, Dec. 13, 1900.

145. LMS Wookey, Sept. 7, 1885. E. Price, p. 196, indicates Sebele married Gorileng c. 1865. Prior to this he had been married to a certain Kedumetse Setlhako whose fate is unknown. According to Majaasuma Motlabani, interviewed Oct. 8, 1985, Ikaeng was already the wife, w/children, of his grandfather Motlabani Moeng, when she gave birth to Sebele's son. Moeng refused to give up his wife but Kgosidintsi allowed her to be installed in Sebele's *lwapa* This controversy accounts for the name of the son: Moiteelasilo: "Somebody who chases the fool" from Sebele's proverbial warning to Motlabani "If you chase a fool, the fool will make trouble."

consent, been Sebele's mistress for some twenty one years during which time she had born him children.[146] In early 1901, he, with the advice and consent of members of the Kgotla including MmaTsholofelo's sons Kealeboga and Kebohula, married her.[147]

At the time of the marriage Molepolole was on the verge of becoming geographically divided along sectarian-political lines.[148] Earlier, the BaKwena had agreed to move most of the village off of Ntsweng hill to the supposedly healthier, less congested, enviroment of the Borakalalo valley some two miles to the north-west. By the end of 1900 the situation was such that while MmaTsholofelo and her sons, along with the Mokgalo ward of the Kgosidintsi's were already located in the valley, Sebele with Baultwe remained on top the hill. Staying with him were many individuals, such as Otladisang, Kooneng, Podile, Mokgatle, and Motsatsi who, according to Wookey, were the leaders of the "heathen party." In March the Kgosi allowed this hill group to organize a *bogwera*. Ironically, although this initiation was led by the now aged Kgosidintsi its formation was a challenge to the BaKereke notables led by his son Baruti. It is said that a especially large number of boys came forward on this occasion in order to be circumcised among the "MaSitaoka," whose name implied that they would

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146. BNA RC 5/12, Sebele to Act.AC(S)(J.Ellenburger), April 14, 1901, noting six children, two of whom had survived. AC 6/13 AC(S) to ARC, Feb. 6, 1905 and Sebele to AC(S) Feb. 16, 1905, further note inclusion of Mathadi's son in Sebele's will. Lloyd, p. 217, who notes that in 1885 Sebele had three wives.

147. BNA RC 5/12, Sebele & Kgahiso Kgabo to AC(S), April 12; Sebele to Act.AC(S), April 14; Baruti to Act.AC(S), April 13, 1901.

148. BNA RC 5/12, Wookey to Act.AC(S), May 4, enclosing Wookey to Surmon, May 3, 1901; Kgabo Tebele to Act.AC(S) April 19, & May 2; Vickerman enclosing MmaTsholofelo to Act.AC(S) April 18; and Lt. Fielding to O.C. Protectorate Police, May 16, 1901. Also LMS Partridge, Nov. 8, 1900 & March 16, 1901.

destroy their enemies as "the grass foraging ants" consume the grass.'[149]

Although he had heretofore been a consistent supporter of *bogwera*, Sebele was not, contrary to the belief of his missionaries, exclusively in favor of either the Bakereke or "heathens." Rather, like his father before him, he sought to placate both camps. By catering to Baruti and the L.M.S., Surmon had, greatly complicated his balancing act. The Kgosi was still commited to moving but had no intention of backing down. Writing to Surmon's assistant, Jules Ellenberger, he noted: "Myself I did give up only in Hut Tax, not in English customs because I am not a Christian."[150] In the above letter Sebele alleged that the recent disturbance had arisen out of Baruti's own jealousy for Baultwe- "I caught Baruti often times in her blankets"- as well as the Kgosana's growing ambition for Chieftainship. He, moreover, implied that it was Baruti's behaviour that ought to be a matter of concern for, to paraphrase, while it might be all right for Baruti to keep four married churchwomen, including his brother's wife, as his sweethearts, his inpregnation of his own sister (Sebele's second wife Ikaeng), was another matter: "If it is right in your custom in ours it is not at all."

Sebele's letter did not deter either Surmon or Ellenberger from trying to have Baultwe deported. Meanwhile, in Cape Town Lord Kitchener's staff were occupied with less petty atrocities. The affair was referred to Goold-Adams, now serving as the Deputy Administrator of the newly occupied

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149. BNA PP 1/5/13 Germond interpretation. As with Motswasele's prophecy the "ants" can also possibly be seen as a methaphor for popular support for *bogosi*. In recent times Masitaoka has been the name of a football club which enjoys the patronage of Kgosing against their local rivals, Molepolole Unitied, who are identified with civil servants.

150. BNA RC 5/12, Sebele to Act.AC(S), April 14, 1901.

Orange River Colony, whose opinion was in favor of the McKwena's removal:

> "The Chief is clearly at liberty to call himself either a Heathen or Christian whichever suites him, or to marry one or forty wives according to his tastes, inclinations and powers but the Government are quite within their rights in finding fault with him for willfully ignoring the advice given to him by Mr. Surmon...also again introducing the heathenish customs of Bagwera, against which all the Christian portion of the tribe have a most rooted aversion, tend to show, that, instead of working in the best interests of his people, he is trying to drive them back into a state of barbarism from which it was hoped they were gradually emerging."[151]

Sebele's old acquaintance Chamberlain was skeptical: "I see no reason for taking so serious a step as deportation at present, nor could I sanction it without the assurance that there is no risk whatever of disturbance."[152] Action was thus delayed till the arrival of the new Resident Commissioner, Ralph Williams.

Williams had already played an important role in regional affairs prior to his recruitment by Milner to reform the Protectorate's, heretofore rather ad hoc, administration.[153] The dispute between Sebele and Baruti provided the new Resident Commissioner with a welcome opportunity to define his policy in favor of a renewed partnership with the Chiefs, which he

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151. BNA 5/12 (also PRO CO 879/76/694), Goold-Adams to Perry, IS, May 31, 1901.

152. BNA 5/12 SS to HC (telegram), July 26, 1901.

153. Ralph Williams *How I became a Governor*, (John Murray, London, 1913.), pp. 112-145, 268; and *The British Lion in Bechuanaland, The Story of the Expedition under Major General Sir Charles Warren* (London, 1885.): In 1885 he he had resigned as the head of the C.I.D. of the "Warren Expedition" in order to act as Rhodes' mouthpiece against the General's greater Bechuanaland scheme and thereafter, during the period prior to the Jameson Raid, had served as H.M.'s Consuler Officer in the Transvaal.

hoped to base on his absolute authority over them and their absolute authority over their subjects. In this respect it was his conviction that the previous practice of separating or exiling malcontents had been a failure: "I know of nothing which has done more harm than the practice of practically rewarding conspirators by giving them land, stock and quasi independence elsewhere.[154] Unlike his two immediate predecessors, he also did not believe that it was his mission to promote "Christian progress." Indeed, he would later write: "My own experience in Africa is that the native is far more trustworthy in his pagan than his semi-Christian state."[155] After hearing the opposing arguments before the Kgotla, in October 1901, Williams was convinced that Sebele was a "weak King" while the "ambitious and unscrupulous" Baruti was his "Earl of Warwick."[156] He dismissed as "very frivolous" the complaint of Baruti and his supporters that their opinions were not being respected and found Sebele to be "dignified and eloquent" when asking: "Who is Baruti that he should seek to rule this people?" He closed his own address to the gathering with a double-edged warning:

> "And you, Baruti, remember this well, that you owe obedience to the chief. When the Government thinks that the chief is unfit to rule his people the Government will remove him, and say who shall be chief, but it is not for you to say. There is a Proclamation which provides that persons disturbing the peace of the country may be removed from it, and the High Commissioner will not hesitate to enforce it upon you if he thinks it appropriate.[157]

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154. BNA S 178/1 Williams to Willoughby, Sept. 26, 1902.

155. Williams *How I became a Governor*, p. 316.

156. BNA RC 6/4, RC to HC, Nov. 7, 1901. Analogy also contained in S 178/1, Williams to Willoughby, Sept. 26, 1902. He, unlike his acting predecessor Surmon, had incidentally also taken the logical step of getting a legal opinion on the intricacies of "Native Marriage," RC 5/19, which confirmed that in "tribal" matters "Native Law and Custom" superceded "Christian rights."

157. Williams was referring to powers granted to him under

Williams thus established an important precedent. In the following months his administration took an equally firm stance in favor of the status quo in the other reserves.[158] While the established missionaries welcomed the resulting colonial hostility to Mothowagae's independent church movement in Gangwaketse, they too were put on notice that it was their duty to uphold the Chieftainship and stay out of its domestic quarrels.[159] Williams main interest was to assure the low cost maintenance of law and order in his vast domain. In this respect his support for chiefly authority went hand in hand with his other major initiative of creating a new, cost efficient, Bechuanaland Protectorate Police which, unlike the earlier BBP, was made up of African, mostly BaSotho, troopers. As long as the Chiefs respected their subordinate place within the colonial heirarchy, the Resident Commissioner's de facto policy of encouraging their autocracy also had the distinct advantage of allowing his Government to justify any number of extralegal actions as being in accordance with a given ruler's, allegedly absolute, powers under "Native law and custom." In this context, whereas Shippard had earlier complained that "One of the main difficulties in the Southern Protectorate is the rapacity with which the Chiefs exercise the despotic power to which they cling so tenaciously.",

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the Order-in-Council of 1891. These powers were subsequently found to be insufficient during the case of Sekgoma Letsholathebe leading to the "Expulsion Law" (below.)

158. In this respect it is notable that prior to March of 1906, when civil war seemed imminent, Williams supported Sekgoma Letsholathebe against the claims Mathiba- PRO CO 879/82/717, RC to HC, Oct. 7, 1903; CO 879/91/802, RC to HC, Jan. 6, 1906: "Both Sekgoma and his opponents thoroughly recognize and respect the power of the British Government." and RC to HC, March 30, 1906: "so far as my official instructions go Sekgoma has always obeyed me" etc. Sekgoma's downfall came despite of, not because of, his strong hand.

159. BNA RC 5/16, Williams to Lewis, April 26, 1902. S 178/1 Williams to Willoughby, Sept. 26, 1902.

Williams would find Sebele's "constitutional weakness and vacillation" to be the source of "a good deal of trouble."[160]

For his part Sebele, eager to maintain his local support, attempted to appease the Bakereke. He hired Baruti's son, Stephan, as Tribal Secretary, removed the Kgotla to the Borakalalo, and levyied for the construction of a new Tribal Church.[161] The diKgosana of the four autonomous *metse* also continued to enjoy de facto rights over their "former" *malata*. Finally, following the death of Kgosidintsi, it was announced that the *bogwera* and *bojale* schools would no longer be allowed to compete with *thuto*.[162] One pleased missionary interpreted "this new sprit of cooperation with the church" to be a sign that Sebele had finally "awakened from his grave of selfishness."[163] Less enthusiastic were some members of the traditionalist faction who, through Sebele's brother Motsatsi, protested their own loss of influence.[164] In keeping with its new policy the Government issued a strong warning to the malcontents to avoid doing anything that might disturb the peace. A similar message was once more extended to Baruti, in 1908, when tensions between him and the Kgosi flared up.[165]

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160. Williams, *How I became a Governor*, p. 278. BNA HC 177/7 (also PRO CO 879/32/392) Shippard to Loch, June 20, 1890.

161. BNA RC 6/4, 7/2 and for the Church (which presently survives as the main UCCSA church in Molepolole): LMS Lewis, Dec. 18, 1907 and April 7, 1909; BNA SOC Sebele to Acting AC(South) undated letter Aug-Sept. 1908 and Sept. 9, 1908; also Div. Comm.(S) 2/1/1 and S 554/1. The levy raised L 1,640 based on a supposed charge of L 5 or an ox per adult male, but while some were sent to the mines to earn cash for the project it is clear that not every individual actually paid the full amount.

162. BNA SOC Sebele to Act. AC(S) June 19, 1908 etc. Also S 190/5. The last *bogwera* was held in 1901, Kgosidintsi died in 1903, active suppression of the institution did not arise until 1908.

163. LMS Lewis, Aug. 21, 1903.

164. BNA RC 7/2 "Motsatsi's attempted rebellion."

165. BNA PP 1/5/16 "Kwena Tribal Affairs Sebele vs. Baruti" (Minutes of enquiry held at Molepolole Feb. 15, 1908. Also SOC

Part 3: "A Child That Does Not Cry Dies In The Cradle"[166]

By guaranteeing the Kgosi's internal authority over his subjects, Williams helped to foster a degree of stability in SeKwena politics during the first decade of the twentieth century. This did not, however, lead to the transformation of *bogosi* into a dependent pawn of colonial interests. The continued autonomy of the office during the remainder of Sebele's reign is best evidenced by his leading role in the regional pan-African campaign to keep the Protectorate outside of the nascent Union of South Africa. In this effort he was ablely assisted by Peter Sidzumo who between 1908 and 1913 served in the dual capacity as Tribal Secretary and Principal of the BaKwena National School.

Peter or Petrus M.J. Sidzumo is one of the great unsung heroes of Botswana for the major role that he played in promoting public opinion against the the danger of South African incorporation. Unfortunately very little in the way of biographical detail is presently available about him. The son of "a well known Mfengu preacher" who settled in Mafikeng, he, along with his, brothers Patrick and Richard, was obviously well educated.[167] He was living in Kanye prior to his employment, in 1898, with the Cape civil service, where he became a close friend and associate of Sol Plaatje.[168] In 1907 Sidzumo, along with a certain G. Tyamzashe, briefly replaced Plaatje as co-editor of Silas Molema's struggling newspaper *Koranta ea Becoana*.[169]

Sebele to AC(S) Jan. 23, Feb. 6 & 9, 1908.

166. Proverb: *"Ngwana o sa leleng o swela tharing"*

167. Brian Willan *Sol Plaatje, A Biography*, (Raven Press, Braamfontien, 1984) p. 65.

168. Ellenberger Diary, Aug. 26, 1897. Willan, p. 65. References to Peter can also be found in *The Boer War Diary of Sol T. Plaatje* edited by John Comaroff (Macmillan, London & Johannesburg, 1973)

169. Brian Willan, p. 135. *Koranta*, published 1901-08

After the collapse of the *Koranta*, Sidzumo, who had acquired a teaching certificate in the Cape Colony, was hired by Sebele largely to fulfill the latter's ambition to establish a secular English medium "National School" at the Kgotla.[170] This aspiration was born out of frustration at the lack of educational progress. At the turn of the century the L.M.S. school in Molepolole was only regularly serving some eighty students, a figure that represented a decline of some 50% since 1870.[171] Its SeTswana curriculum only went as far as Standard Three which, besides teaching the fundamentals of reading, writing, and arithmetic, consisted of Bible History, Catechisms, and learning the map of Africa. Despite over a half century of *thuto* no MoKwena had even earned a teaching certificate.[172] To the Bakereke leadership and other concerned BaKwena "progressives," who had as their rallying cry "the hindmost boar falls to the dogs," it was apparent that their schools were failing to prepare students to meet the challenges of the region's changing political-economy.[173]

Sebele had been pressing the L.M.S. to introduce a higher curriculum into the local school system since 1894.[174] By establishing his National School he had succeeded in

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w/support of the diKgosi of the BaRolong booRatshidi, BaHurutshe, and BaNgwaketse, as the first black African owned newspaper for SeTswana speakers. Tyamzashe was possibly G.W. Tyamzashe, in Skota, p. 277, who, in 1898, was one of the founding directors of the IsiXhosa/English newspaper *Izwi Labantu* (NB. the prominent evangelist Gwayi Tyamzashe had died in 1896.)

170. BNA SOC, Sidzumo to AC(S) May 14, 1908 and Sebele to AC(S) June 4, 1908.

171. BNA AC 6/14, Act.AC(S) to ARC, June 10, 1901. Also LMS Price, Nov. 30, 1870; James Burns "Report on L.M.S. Schools" in Willoughby, Dec. 19, 1904. WCW/SO 750, "Education Visits Kanye, Molepolole 1909."

172. BNA SOC, Sebele to AC(S) June 4, 1908 (supported by Burns' "Report on L.M.S. Schools.")

173. Proverb: *"Kolobe ya marago ke ya dintsa"* BNA S 40/9, RC to AC(S), Sept. 8, 1909.

174. LMS H. Williams, June 8, 1894.

outflanking his internal critics on the education issue, while leap frogging the colonial administration's own, minimal, concern about the quality of instruction in the territory as reflected in the "Sargent Report."[175] In May of 1908, a new School Committee was constituted to oversee expenditures for the school, which was to be supported by a 2 shilling levy on all taxpayers.[176]

Although the Bakwena National School never quite matched the high ambitions of its founders, the manner and context of its formation was a reflection of Sebele's growing identification of his *bogosi* with the major currents within the then rising regional tide of black African nationalism. In June of 1908 Sebele had Sidzumo draft a long letter, "Natal's Native Policy- Some aspects reviewed- Why South Africa fails," which he forwarded to a number of southern African newspapers as well as the July 1908 convention of the Interstate Native College Scheme.[177] The text of this rather remarkable polemic, which was apparently inspired by a commentary by a certain V. Crole of Vyrheid on the then ongoing deliberations of the Natal Native Affairs Commission on Native Education, begins:

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175. WCW/SO 750, "Education Visits Kanye, Molepolole, 1909," contains Willoughby's account of a notably acrimonius debate within the Kgotla over the Kgosi's alleged neglect of education. E.B. Sargent *Report on Native Education in South Africa, Part III, Education in the Protectorates*, (Headly, Surrey, England, 1908.)

176. BNA SOC, Sidzumo to AC(S) May 14, with Petition/Letter by Kealeboga, Ntsono, Kalamore, Motsatsi and Baruti, May 5, and Sebele to AC(S) June 4, 1908. The levy and the committee, in slightly revised form, was officially approved in October of 1909- S. 40/9. Also LMS Lewis, July 8, 1908 and July 27, 1910.

177. BNA SOC, June 6, 1908, copies to the *Diamond Field Advertizer*, *Izwi Labantu* and *Naledi ea Lesotho*. Sebele's *in absentia* address before the Interstate Native College Scheme meeting was posted on the 22nd of June with apologies for not being able to attend do to "urgent local affairs" and a wish for the convention's success. For the political importance of the Scheme in the rise of African nationalism see Odendaal, pp. 66-67, 82. Papers on the Scheme, itself, in WCW/SO 750.

> "But then who is really to blame that the Kafirs has thus commenced reading at the wrong end of the book? It is a very common fallacy frequently hinted at by many white witnesses that a good deal of the blame for the existing unsatisfactory state of affairs rests on the shoulders of the missionaries. Surely not the missionaries so much as the colonists who became unduly alarmed at the prospect of the natives becoming skilled workmen and competing with local white workmen. Is it not really the fault of the white population entirely that the opening of a technical institution for Natives has been delayed till a few months ago in that colony <Natal>? What advances have the colonists made generally in regard to the Native Problem? Is it really true that a French Committee has drafted a bill under the instructions of the Minister of Education for the Establishment of an African University at Algiers? Have the French undoubtedly not shown great courage in dealing with this phase of the Education Problem? Is it not a rather startling fact that the Great French Native dependency is represented in the Parliament of Paris by aboriginal and elected deputies!!! Why should South Africa prove so marked an exception?"

"Why South Africa Fails" was part of a larger strategy then being orchestrated by Sebele and Sidzumo to keep the Bechuanaland Protectorate under Imperial protection and thus out of the then proposed "Closer Union" of South African colonies. The possibility of incorporation had become apparent to all in the wake of the publication of the Selborne Memorandum in 1907. Selborne's object had been "to review the general situation in South Africa in such a manner as may enable the people of this country to appreciate the difficulties of administration under the present system, and consider whether (and if so by what means) it is advisable to establish a central national government embracing all the British Colonies and Protectorates."[178] At the time, the Memorandum provoked much comment from both sides of the color

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178. *Papers Relating to a Federation of South African Colonies*, (HMSO, London, July 1907.) High Commissioner, Selborne, to Secretary of State, Crewe, January 7, 1907.

bar. In May of 1908 a Inter-colonial Railway and Customs Conference called for the convening of a National Convention made up of delegates appointed by the parliaments of the four (white) self-governing colonies in order to draft a charter for the Closer Union or Federation of South Africa.[179]

During the same month as the call for the National Convention, Sebele forwarded the first in a series of petitions expressing his subject's objection to the prospect of their place in any Closer Union:

> "That in the event of the coming Federation or Unification becoming a reality, we should like to see all our rights reserved and protected under the Imperial Government. That in the event of the coming Federation or Unification is going to rob us of all our present rights or interests in so far as our land is concerned, we are not going to federate....I am the inheritance left by the late Queen Victoria the Good, under His Majesty the King Edward VII. I do not want any Government except Imperial Government."[180]

Sebele was the first Chief in any of the Protectorates to call for the retention of Imperial control in the face of the movement to unite British South Africa as a white dominion. His petition was, however, closely preceded by a May 12th letter from Khosi Letsie II of Lesotho, which essentally

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179. All of British Africa south of the Zambezi, including the Protectorates, had been united in a single customs union since 1903. Representation of the B.P. and the other Protectorates at this Conference had been requested by Selborne but had been rejected by the Ministers of the self governing colonies- PRO CO 879/97/897, HC to SS, May 4, w/ enclosures and HC to SS, (also) May 4, 1908 w/ enclosures.

180. BNA SOC, Sebele to ActAC(S)(to be forwarded to RC) May 23, 1908. An additional copy with related correspondence is in PRO CO 879/97/897 HC to Secretary of State, July 20, 1908. Other related papers in BNA S 39/7.

asked: "Are we of Basutoland thought of in this unification?"[181] Although their entreaties were the product of independent iniatives thereafter the efforts, as well as fortunes, of the BaKwena and other BaTswana became closely intertwined with those of their BaSotho cousins.

Initially it was Letsie's words that served to concentrate imperial minds. At the time Lord Selborne was proposing to his superior Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that sovereignty over the Protectorates be immediately transferred to any new Union government.'[182] Shortly thereafter Herbert Sloley, the Resident Commissioner for Basutoland, was brought into the discussion with particular reference to the probable BaSotho response in the wake of Letsie's letter. Sloley is reported by Selborne to have noted that: "In the event of the Basuto becoming seriously dissatisfied and restless, the effect of this would probably be far reaching among the South African tribes."[183] To which the High Commissioner added:

> "By this last remark Mr. Sloley did not mean, he explained, that unrest in Basutoland was likely to precipitate that 'General native rising' which to some minds is the object of constant apprehension; he intended rather to convey that their present form of government constituted a certain barrier between the Basuto and surrounding tribes and that any change of government which both weakened that barrier and was resented by the Basuto might tempt them to make common cause with other discontented tribes."[184]

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181. PRO CO 879/97/897 HC to SS June 1, 1908 w/enclosures (a third petition "to remain under the King as we now are," was forwarded by Ndlovukazi Labotsibini of Swaziland and 20 others on July 28, 1908: HC to SS August 24, 1908 w/enclosures.)

182. PRO CO 879/97/897 HC to SS May 18, 1908.

183. BNA S 39/7 HC to SS, June 22, 1908.

184. BNA S 39/7 (id.) Booth, p.139, notes that even earlier, May 8, 1908, Selborne had written to Crewe that if Basutoland were to be merged with the Orange River Colony, as the Cape

The High Commissioner cited the above concerns in his proposal "that a proper scheme for the administration of the native territories should be a fundamental part of the Constitution."[185] Central to his vision of a "proper scheme" was the creation of a commission whose future members would be appointed by the Governor-General-in-Council subject to the concurrence of His Majesty's Government. It was noted that: "The effect of this would be that His Majesty's Government would have a veto on all obviously improper appoin$_{tments}$." In other words Selborne envisioned a continuing supervisory role for the Imperial government in the administration of the Protectorates following their incorporation. He also seconded Sloley's suggestion that clauses governing any transfer should "provide in some way for the recognition of the <Basotho> National Council and of the position of the Chiefs."

Selborne specifically raised the issue of the Bechuanaland Protectorate's position in a confidential telegram wired to Crewe in July of 1908, by which time the former's attention would have been called to Sebele's petition.[186] In it he expressed his fear that the territory's weak revenue base would compromise his ambition to keep it, after transfer, free from the direct control of the South African Parliament, which would be responsible for making up any budgetary shortfall. In this context he suggested that the factor of residual British South Africa Company claims, along with geographic position and boundary complications with German South-West Africa could be invoked to justify the temporary exclusion of

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Prime Minister, John X. Merriman, had recently suggested: "the Basutos as one man would fly to arms and, in my opinion, the most serious and unjustifiable native war which had ever taken place in South Africa would supervene."

185. BNA S 39/7 (id.) Selborne had earlier intimated such a need in his initial call for their transfer.

186. PRO CO 879/106/900 HC to SS, July 15; and 97/897 HC to SS, July 20, (the petition had reached the RC on June 5, and been received at the HC's office on June 20, 1908.)

Bechuanaland from South Africa. Although no instructions were given by Crewe at this time he, specifically citing the BaSotho factor, nonetheless expressed his opinion that it was perhaps advisable to put off the incorporation of the Protectorates until after the formation of the Union itself, while including in its enacting legislation a provision for their possible future absorption which might also address the question of "native consent."[187] Ultimately Crewe's preference for delay linked with Selborne's concept for a "High Commission" to safeguard African interests, formed the basis of the Imperial position on the question at the National Convention.[188]

In June and July of 1908, Letsie and Sebele received, in reply to their petitions, formal notifications of the calling of the National Convention coupled with the same vague assurances that in the event of regional amalgamation the protection of both their and their people's legitimate interests "will receive the constant attention and ernest consideration both of the High Commissioner and of his Majesty's Government."[189] Their immediate response was to redouble their efforts at mobilizing opposition to the clear and present danger that now lay before them. Already the two courts were consulting with one another. On May 30th Sebele, in reply to Letsie, expressed his interest in maintaining such contact and further enquired about the workings and "laws" of the Basotho National Council[190] While one can only speculate as to the motivations of his interest in the Council its value

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187. PRO CO 879/106/900 SS to HC, July 17, 1908.

188. For this reason the three territories were subsequently referred to as "The High Commission Territories" although said commission never actually came into being.

189. BNA S 39/7 (also PRO CO 879/97/897) HC to RC(BP and Basutoland) June 30, 1908.

190. BNA SOC, Sebele to Letsie, May 30, 1908 (in Setswana) w/follow up Sidzumo to Jas. R. Makepe, July 18, 1908.

as both a voice of, and institutional shield for, the BaSotho must have been manifest. Sidzumo was also in touch with Letsie's secretary, Phillip Modise, as well as Simon Phamotse, leader of the Basutoland Progressive Association and editor of the newspaper *Naledi ea Lesotho*.[191]

Besides the fear of incorporation a major issue of mutual concern for the BaKwena and BaSotho were the "Expulsion Laws" recently proclaimed by the High Commissioner empowering him to either confine or remove from a territory any person believed to constitute "a danger to the peace order and good government."[192] Both the laws themselves and much of the regionwide concern among African's about them were a product of the legal controversy then surrounding the detention of Sekgoma Letsholathebe, the deposed Kgosi of the BaTawana.[193] On the same day that he had drafted his petition Sebele had also written to express his opposition to the Expulsion Law stating that a person should not be expelled "unless found

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191. BNA SOC, Sidzumo to "P.M. my friend" (Phillip Modise) September 9, 1908 in reply to August 24, 1908 and Sidzumo to Editor Basutoland Star (Naledi) August 22, 1908 (to which Sidzumo was an occasional contributer.)(In August of 1908 the Progressive Association passed a resolution against Federation or Unification until the door of equal rights of all subjects irrespective of color or means was opened.)

192. For Lesotho: PRO CO 897/100/927 "Official Gazette Extraordinary, 28th December, 1907, Proclamation no. 46 of 1907." For Botswana: BNA BNB 979 (M. Williams): Proclamation no. 15 of 1907.

193. PRO CO 879/97/897 RC(Basutoland) to HC, Oct. 2, (in HC to SS, Nov. 16, 1908): "The anxiety of the chiefs in regard to this law probably is due to a great extent to accounts which have reached them as to the deportation of the Batawana Chief Sekgoma Letsholathebe, of Ngamiland. I have reason to believe that messengers and communications from Sekgoma have, on more than one occasion, been sent to the chiefs of this country."

guilty by his own tribe."[194] His protest was sharply rejected.[195] But in August Sidzumo reported "that the Paramount Chief of the Bakwena was very much pleased to hear of the Basuto Petition to the King Edward VII against the Expulsion Law of the 'Undesirables' in the Bechuanaland and Basutoland Protectorates."[196]

In addition to re-establishing an alliance with the BaSotho, the BaKwena, through the ever productive typewriter of Sidzumo, took the initiative during the months of August and September of 1908 in mobilizing other Protectorate *merafe* against the potential threat of transfer. In this effort Sebele's Secretary found a early ally in Segale Pilane, an already established acquaintance who was serving as Secretary to his brother Linchwe. Segale had sent a gift bull to Sebele along with a letter appealing for friendship among the diKgosi.[197] Sebele responded favorably to Segale, informing him of his position on a number of local controversies. With this letter Sidzumo attached his own greetings to "Kgosi Segale K.

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194. BNA SOC Sebele to Act.AC(S) May 23, 1908. Although opposed to the expulsion law, and in friendly contact w/Sekgoma, Sebele, himself, allowed Sidzumo to publish two letters supporting Williams' decision that "Mathiba is the Chief of the Batawana by right of birth." SOC: Sidzumo to *Diamond Fields Advertiser* Aug. 29 and Sept. 5, 1908; and Sebele to "Morena Letsholathebe" July 23, 1908. Also PRO CO 879/102/932 ARC to HC, Aug. 4, 1909, which notes Linchwe and Bathoen's refusal to take Sekgoma but speculates that Sebele would be willing to give him asylum.

195. BNA SOC, Sebele to Act.AC(S), July 11, in reply to his of July 5, 1908.

196. BNA SOC Sidzumo to "P.M. my friend," Sept. 9, 1908, who added "As I have already told you the chief protested against this Expulsion Law- but was told to 'shut up' and that the proclamation cannot and will never be altered- Thanks Basuto indeed."

197. BNA SOC, Sebele to "*Morena* Segale K. Pilane" August 7, 1908. Based on this reply, Segale's gesture appears to have been motivated by a then ongoing border dispute between the BaKwena and BaNgwaketse and the then recent disturbances caused by millenerian "Prophet" Sentso Legong.

Pilane" in which he dwelled on the threat of unification warning that "if we do not say anything about our rights we will be killed by our quietness."

The following month Sidzumo also began to lobby the BaNgwaketse and BaNgwato. In a letter to Bathoen he began by noting fears stemming from newspaper stories about the coming of single legal and governmental order in South Africa which would legislate for blacks as well as whites.

> "We have found that the white people do not like anything about the black people neither do they appreciate to see them own their own land the wealth which was given to them (ie. the blacks) by god. They only wish to see destruction, hatred, war and poverty for the black people. Many whites also do not like the powers of our rulers. They destroy the powers of Basotho and Matebele rulers because they do not want to be guided by the laws of Natal and the Transvaal but would rather be under the laws of King Edward VII. We are not the nations which have met about the new Union"[198]

With this letter Sidzumo apparently enclosed a draft protest for the BaNgwaketse based on the earlier BaKwena petition, which was subsequently reproduced and forwarded by Bathoen.[199] The day after his communication with Bathoen, Sidzumo also wrote to O. Sekgome, the Secretary to Khama III, requesting his master's views on the "Closer Union of South African Natives under Federation or Unification," while noting

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198. BNA SOC Sidzumo to Bathoen, September 17, 1908 (original in Setswana: his use of the terms "Basotho" and "Matebele" may refer to SeSotho-Tswana and SiNguni speaking peoples in general). WCW/SO 750, "Eduction Visits," Willoughby at about this time noted that Bathoen had also hired a educated Mfengu named Daniel as his Secretary.

199. The BaNgwaketse petition, hand written in English, appears in BNA SOC at the end of the letter to Bathoen following the words "*mo mafhokong a*" (in these words.) The same petition was forwarded by Bathoen on Oct. 14, 1908- BNA S 39/6.

that "the Native Question is the only present obstacle towards the closer union of various South African governments."[200]

While the Bakwena National Office was taking the lead in promoting pan-BaTswana unity within the Protectorate another sort of consensus was then emerging out of the deliberations of the National Convention. The conference met behind closed doors from October 1908 until February 1909, when its delegates unanimously agreed to a constitution creating a unitary state based on rigid white supremacy. The limited franchise then enjoyed by non-whites in the Cape Colony was not extended to the other provinces of the proposed Union. Elective offices where, furthermore, reserved for those of "European descent." On the question of the Protectorates an inability to reach a quick understanding on the issue assured that any transfer would not come until after the formation of the Union.[201] But the Convention did agree to a twenty-five point Schedule to the draft constitution, which incorporated most of Selborne's proposals in modified form. One critical alteration was over the appointment and powers of the High Commission. It was to have advisory status only and be totally free of Imperial oversight. The provisional acceptance of this Schedule by all parties left the door still open for an early incorporation.

The Acting Resident Commissioner, Barry May, notified the BaTswana of likelihood of their future inclusion into the nascent South African state after the National Convention had largely completed its work. Selborne, citing promises made in

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200. BNA SOC, Sidzumo to O. Sekgome, Sept. 18, 1908 (he went on to enquire as to whether Sekgome received the *Naledi ea Lesotho* newspaper and was aware of the recent resolutions against the Union passed by the Basotho Progressive Association?)

201. Details of negotiations contained in- PRO CO 879/106/900 and 925.

response to Sebele's petition, had instructed May to inform the BaTswana on his behalf that while "it was not the intention of His Majesty's Government to sanction any change at present in the system under which the Bechuanaland Protectorate is governed" and the position of the Bechuanaland Protectorate was to some degree different from that of other territories due to the BSAC concessions, it was clear that the Protectorate was "an intregral portion of South Africa" and it could not "be permanently administered apart from the general political comity of South Africa."[202] On 5th of January, May delivered the High Commissioner's message before the BaNgwato in which he included the words "but it is quite possible, in fact practically certain that the time will come in the future that it will be in the welfare of all concerned that the Imperial government should no longer directly govern the Bechuanaland Protectorate."[203] In a brief speech Khama reportedly replied that his people were quite satisfied to live under the Imperial Government, by whom they had always been well treated and helped, and he hoped that they would not be handed over to any South African Government, but would remain under direct Imperial rule. The Acting Resident Commissioner further reported that: "I asked Khama if he wished to send a written communication to Your Excellency (ie. the High Commissioner), but he said 'No,' and that he would be quite satisfied if I informed you of what he said." Only two others are said to have spoken at the meeting.

The relatively low-key response that greeted May in Serowe stood in sharp contrast with his *pitso* with the southern Protectorate diKgosi and a large gathering their followers at Gaberones two days later. In his dispatch the

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202. BNA S 39/7 (also PRO CO 879/100/927) HC to RC, December 28, 1908.

203. BNA S 39/7, Act.RC to HC, Jan. 12, 1909 w/enclosure "My friend Khama and Bamangwato People."

Acting Commissioner claimed he "repeated as nearly as possible what had been said in Serowe."[204] Partial minutes of the meeting prepared by the BaKwena and BaNgwaketse, however, do not contain any reference in the Assistant Commissioner's opening remarks to BSAC interests and are on a whole less reassuring then what appears in his written statement to the BaNgwato.[205] Except for this apparent contradiction the two accounts of the meeting are in general agreement. Sebele was the first to reply to May stating:

> "I hear what you have said. When the three Chiefs went to England, we feared the rule of the Chartered Company. We went because we did not want a new Government. Then, too, we were afraid both of the Transvaal and Cape Government. We wished to be under the direct control of the Imperial Government; we cannot now be annexed by another Government. I am under the King- King Edward. True, we may appear useless people; nevertheless we have no desire to change. We are thankful for the protection we enjoy to-day. To be handed over- no. We wish to rule our people as heretofore. We decide our disputes according to our customs. When a man is born under one Government how can he be happy under another? If we go, we go simply as the result of compulsion; but our hearts we leave behind..."[206]

Sebele was followed by Bathoen, of whose address address May reported:

> "he created quite a dramatic little scene. He held out his hand in order that all might see a signet ring, engraved with a crocodile, the totem of the Bangwaketsi, and declared: 'A ring is the sign of an indissoluble bond. This ring was given to me by the late Queen Victoria....as a proof that the promises made would never be broken and that the Bangwaketsi would for ever remain under the protection of Her

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204. BNA S 39/7, Act.RC to HC, Jan. 12, 1909.

205. Minutes published in *The Times*(London), July 24, 1909. the discrepency could have been a product of either translation, English to Setswana to English (the meeting itself was carried out in Setswana), or editing.

206. *The Times*, July 24, 1909.

> Majesty.' Then turning to Sebele he called upon him to produce his sign, which the latter immediately did by raising his hand, on which all could see a similar ring."[207]

Bathoen was followed by Linchwe, Baitlotle of the BaLete, and "many" others, including non-royals, all of whom were unanimous in their firm opposition to transfer.

Unlike Khama the southern diKgosi proved eager to forward petitions of their desire to prevent any change in British sovereignty over them. A second BaKwena petition to the High Commissioner, drafted the day after the meeting, was followed by similar efforts on behalf of the Bakgatla bagaKgafela, BaLete and BaNgwaketse.[208] The BaKwena and BaNgwaketse appeals were particularly notable for both their lawyerly arguments with regard to the 1895 "contract," and their forthright and detailed condemnations of discrimanatory practices within the colonies. All of the petitions were forwarded to London in February of 1909. Their appearance conveniently coincided with the arrival of a BaSotho deputation bearing two petitions from Letsie "with the other Chiefs and people of the Basotho nation to His Majesty King Edward VII" on the subjects of the Union and the Expulsion

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207. *The Times*: "she also confirmed with a ring given to each of the chiefs; it is a token that what had been agreed upon should not be upset. Is that not what a ring signifies in marriage?....The other cattle posts of the King (the different colonies) may agree, but this cattlepost (the Protectorate) is the King's in a special sense. He has taken us, married us, and confirmed the contract with a ring." (May believed that the rings had actually been given by Joseph Chamberlain.)

208. BNA S 39/7 Sebele to HC, Jan. 8, w/cover letter to R C Jan. 27; Linchwe etc. to RC. Jan. 11, (this petition was drafted by Segale an original draft along with a copy of the BaKwena petition exist in a note-book of his at the Phuthadikobo Museum in Mochudi); Baitlotle to AC(S), Jan. 18; and, S 39/6, Bathoen to HC Feb. 2, 1909 (Bathoen's petition was delayed due to illness)(Copies of all the above petitions also in PRO C.O. 876/100/927.)

Laws.[209] The BaSotho petitions were presented before the King, himself, as well as the Secretary of State, who had by then read the BaTswana documents.[210]

The protests had an impact. Besides leaving little doubt in the minds of Imperial officialdom about the depth of BaTswana and BaSotho opposition to the Union, the arguments of Bathoen and Sebele about their "marriage" kept the colonial Office busy in trying to determine what commitments had been made.[211] In April 1909 Crewe wrote to Selborne that while "no promise was given in 1895 that the arrangements then made should never be liable to alteration....I take this opportunity of observing that, although the Schedule to the draft South Africa Bill does not make the consent of the Chiefs an essential condition of the transfer of the native territories, there will obviously be difficulty, when the time comes, in carrying out the transfer without their consent or, at least, their acquiescence."[212] By this time the High Commissioner had already begun to draft amendments to the Schedule in order to increase the autonomy and authority of the High Commission.[213] The words spoken at Gaberones Camp would prove to have additional value to the BaTswana when they were carried to Britain.

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209. Main correspondence relating to the Basotho deputation in PRO CO 897/97/897, further on the Expulsion Laws in PRO 897/101/931 & PRO 897/100/927.

210. The AmaSwazi leadership like Khama were content to make strong verbal protests before their own Acting Resident Commissioner- PRO 897/100/927: Meeting at Mbabane between Act. RC and the Chief Regent and Swazi Council on Tuesday, 12th January, 1909.

211. BNA S 39/6 (also PRO CO 879/100/927) HC to SS, Feb. 22, 1909.

212. PRO CO 897/100/927 SS to HC, April 30, 1909.

213. PRO CO 897/100/927 HC to SS, March 22, 1909.

The BaTswana struggle to remain outside of South Africa entered a new phase during February and March of 1909, when Bathoen and Sebele recruited J. Gerrans of Mafikeng to act as their agent in London.[214] In an effort to further strengthen their position Sebele wrote to Khama in April referring to their 1895 partnership and warning him of the need to once more take active measures.[215] At the time the Resident Magistrate at Serowe reported that the MoNgwato was becoming increasingly disturbed by reports about the implications of the Union.[216] But Khama was subsequently said to be satisfied with the Resident Commissioner's confirmation of the assurances that had been given the past January and he did not become involved in Gerrans' efforts.[217]

Before leaving for the U.K., Gerrans contacted W.P. Schreiner and thereafter became a full member of the former Cape Colony Prime Minister's "Coloured and Native People's Delegation."[218] Among those who had approached Schreiner to lead this delegation were Letsie II, Simon Phamotse and Edouard Jacottet in separate initiatives on behalf of the BaSotho.[219] The other members of the Delegation were Abdul Abdurahman, D.J. Lenders and Matt Fredericks of the African

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214. PRO 879/100/927 Gerrans to Colonial Office, July 22, 1909 which contains Bathoen to Gerrans, February 18, 1909 and Sebele w/Baruti Kgosidintsi, Motsatsi Sechele and Kealeboga to Gerrans, March 24, 1909.

215. Khama III Papers, Khama III Memorial Museum, Serowe, Out letters 1898-1922, Sebele to Khama, April 9, 1909.

216. BNA S 39/5, Act.RM Serowe to GS, May ??, 1909.

217. BNA S 39/5, RC to Act.RM, May 29, 1909 and reply to same, June 1, 1909.

218. For a full history of the delegation see Andre Odendaal *Black Protest Politics in south Africa to 1912* (David Roth, South Africa 1984), chapter 9.

219. Eric Walker *W.P. Schreiner, A South African*, (Oxford 1937) pp. 323-324. Also Odendaal, p. 210. W.P's brother, Theophilus, had by this time already captured the Colonial Office's attention with a series of articles on the fate of the Protectorates- PRO CO 879/97/897 Governor of the Transvaal (Selborne) to SS, October 5, 1908 w/enclosures.

Peoples' Organization, John Tengo Jabavu of the Cape Native Convention, and Walter Rubusana, Daniel Dwanya and Thomas Mapikela of the South African Native Convention. [220] The group sought to amend the South Africa Act by removing the color bar in the spirit of Cecil Rhodes's "equal rights for all civilised men from the Cape to the Zambesi."[221] It aimed also to prevent any change in the status of the Protectorates "without its consent, expressed by its chiefs, councilors, and people assembled in open Council."[222] While Bathoen and Sebele allowed Gerrans to involve himself with the Delegation, they and other Protectorate leaders did not accept invitations to be represented at the inaugural meeting of the South African Native Convention in March 1909, probably due to a desire to maintain a strategic distance between themselves and political activities in the colonies.[223]

The arrivals of the Coloured and Native Peoples' Delegation in London in early July of 1909 coincided with the simultaneous disembarkings of a nineteen member "official" delegation made up of many of the leading white South African politicians of the day. At least some of the latter party came prepared to press for a firm guarantee that the Protectorates would soon become part of their Union. Also shipped in was a secret dispatch from Walter Healy-Hutchinson, Governor of the Cape Colony, enclosing secret letters by General Methuen,

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220. Other notables working with the delegation included Pixley Seme and Alfred Mangena who agreed to represent the Transvaal Native Congress, as well as fellow London students D.D.T. Jabavu, Ismail Abdurahman and Richard Msimang. Also present was John Dube, editor of *Ilanga lase Natal*, who had travelled to the UK separately, and a separate Indian delegation of Mahandas Gandhi and Haji Habib, Transvaal Indian Congress, and M.C. Anglia, Natal Indian Congress.

221. Karis, Carter, and Johns, pp. 53-54, "Resolutions of the South African Native Convention, March 24-26, 1909.

222. PRO CO 879/100/927 Transvaal, the Governor to SS, April 5, 1909.

223. Odendaal, p. 169.

Officer Commanding the Forces in South Africa, "on the subject of the fighting strength and resources of the Basuto." The report concluded that the "60,000-80,000 fighting men" the BaSotho could put in the field, along with the quality of their arms and military organization, the local Lesotho terrain, and the consequent potential for sustained guerilla warfare, would pose a major challenge in the advent of a general uprising.[224] The report, which was circulated to the Prime Ministers of the self governing colonies as well as within the Colonial Office, must have made for sober reading to any inclined to simply dismiss the concerns of the BaSotho leadership.

Lord Crewe held secret talks with the official South African delegates on the 20th and 21st of July. Most discussion centered around proposed amendments to and clarifications about the Schedule, the most important of which was a guarantee the the three territories could not be partitioned following their incorporation (in his opening remarks the Secretary of State made it clear that his government "were prepared to see the bill through both as to franchise and as to representation.")[225] During the talks it was also made clear to the South Africans that the Schedule would not come into operation immediately. However additional amendments, proposed by the Resident Commissioners of Basutoland and Bechuanaland, which sought to institutionalize the status of the Chiefs and the Basutoland National Council were ruled out.[226]

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224. PRO CO 879/106/925 enclosed in Governor of the Cape of Good Hope to SS, June 7, 1909.

225. PRO CO 879/106/933, South Africa Bill, Conference between Delegates from South Africa and the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

226. PRO CO 879/100/927, HC to SS, July 3, 1909 (also BNA 39/7 for B.P.)

Press reports at the time confirm that, while discussions over the South Africa Act and Schedule were held *in camera*, the outcome of the talks was anticipated and understood by informed opinion.[227] For the agents and sympathizers of Protectorate opinion the challenge remained to get the government to commit itself to respecting indigenous opinion prior to any transfer. In this respect Gerrans scored a notable coup by having *The Times* to publish, in full, his "report of the meeting convened by Mr. Barry May in the Bechuanaland Protectorate, at which the subject of South African Union was officially discussed with the chiefs of the Protectorate."[228] The publication of Bathoen and Sebele's views had an immediate, although immeasurable, effect on public discussions. One advantage the diKgosi enjoyed, in contrast to the members of the Coloured and Native Peoples' Delegation, was their colonial credibility as spokesmen for their people. The prominent display of the BaTswana rulers' views helped to buttress the standing of the "Native" members of the Delegation, a fact that at least one of the later group, Jabavu, was quick to appreciate.[229]

The manner in which the BaTswana position was presented was also advantageous in that it challenged then prevailing stereotype, perpetuated as much by white liberal "negrophilist" as their "negrophobe" opposites, that "natives" naturally

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227. *The Times* July 21 and 23, 1909 for example quoate Reuter's in what are accurate assessments of the talks.

228. *The Times*, July 24, 1909. On the previous day the same "report" had also been received at the Colonial Office- PRO CO 879/100/927 J. Gerrans to Lionel Earle, Private Secretary, Colonial Office, July 22, 1909.

229. *The Times*, July 28, 1909, (report on breakfast meeting of Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society to hear from members of the Coloured and Native Peoples' Delegation.) A similar, albeit in vain, breakthrough for the Delegation had been the approval by the various traditional leaders on Transkie Territories General Council of a petition calling for a non-racial franchise.

needed the assistance of others in articulating their interests. On this score Bathoen and Sebele's skill in elocution was the subject of a article in *The Times* entitled "The Vice of Generalities" which noted that: "The speeches of these barbarian chiefs, even as reported in English, are far better reading than the speeches of most European statesmen."[230] The article went on to contrast various passages, which were once more quoted, with "the coldness and staleness of modern civilized speech." Possibly unrelated, but worth noting, is the fact that it was only after publishing the diKgosi's words that *The Times* agreed to print letters submitted by the black members of the Delegation. Reaction also came from South Africa, whose press now carried accounts of the Gaborone testimony.[231]

Three days after the *Times* article, the Labour M.P. Keir Hardie raised the issue of the Protectorates during question time when he asked (reportedly to Ministerial cheers) the Under Secretary of State, Colonel Seely "whether in the concurrence of all parties in the measure native opinion in the Protectorates has been taken into account, whether in the event of the time coming when it is proposed to transfer Protectorates from the Crown to the new Parliament the House of Commons will be allowed to discuss the matter before it becomes finally binding...?"[232]

> (Seely:) "as to the natives, we have taken every step we possibly could to ascertain what their wishes are. With regard to the second point, which is akin to it, as to the transfer of the Protectorates, I think I made it plain in my statement that the schedule to the Bill is permissive, that it arranges the broad principles in

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230. *The Times*, July 26, 1909.

231. *Diamond Fields Advertiser* August 19, 1909. Also LMS Howard Williams Sept. 30, and Alfred Wookey Oct. 8, 1909.

232. *Hansards Parliamentry Debate*, vol. 9 new series, July 27, 1909

> regard to native rights and immunities on which such a transfer shall be affected, if and when that transfer is desired by South Africa as a whole and is assented to by the Crown."
>
> (Hardie:) "Including the natives?"
>
> (Seely:) "Certainly when I say South Africa as a whole I mean South Africa as a whole."

In completing his answer the Undersecretary was careful to sidestep the question of whether the Commons would have the opportunity for discussion prior to any change in the status of the Protectorates. But two weeks later, during the formal Commons debate of the Union of South Africa Act, Seely, in response to further opposition queries confirmed the Government's commitment to allow the House to express its opinion before any transfer. He went on say, in what subsequently proved to be a symbolically important promise, that: "the wishes of the natives in the territories will be most carefully considered before any transfer takes place."[233]

The Union of South Africa Act was quickly passed and on May 31, 1910. This event coincided with the forwarding of three new, carefully drafted petitions to "our Great Chief, Edward VII" from his "loyal subjects" the BaNgwato, BaNgwaketse and BaKwena, which once more laid out their case for the preservation of the 1895 agreement.[234] The appearance of these appeals brought to a close the BaTswana campaign to

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233. *Hansards*, August 16, 1909. Hardie during the same session proposed that a moratorium of ten years be put into effect before any transfer could take place but withdrew the motion after it was argued that it passage might only increase pressure for the implementation of the Schedule at the end of the decade.

234. BNA S 39/5, Khama III and Bangwato to King, April 24, 1910. S 39/6 Bathoen I and Bangwaketse to King, April 30, 1910. S 38/2 Sebele I and Bakwena to King, August 16, 1910 (according to minute by Resident Commissioner, Nov. 15, 1910, the Bakwena petition was delayed "due to Sebele's serious illness.")

prevent their inclusion into the nascent Closer Union as well as the beginning of a new and much longer campaign preserve their status outside of the powerful white Dominion now established along their border.

Chapter 5

ALL THE KINGS MEN, 1911-40

This chapter examines the troubled reigns of Sebele I's two successors, diKgosi Sechele II (1911-18) and Sebele II (1918-40), by focusing on their struggles against various internal and external challenges to their rule. During the period the BaKwena were increasingly polarized by what was fundamentally a power struggle between the Kgosi and a significant number of the Sons of Kgabo. With the general erosion of the material foundations of Sechele's precolonial social order, as reflected by the participation of all sections of the society in migrant labor, the pre-eminent position of the Sons of Kgabo had steadily declined. A faction of the "true crocodiles" unsuccessfully sought to resist this trend by attempting to regain political ascendency within the Kgotla, while also using the congregational structures of the established L.M.S. church to shape a moral consensus in their favor. Lacking broad internal support, they appealed for British backing on the basis of their pretensions as both Christians and leading headmen. At times, the colonial establishment favored the dissidents' cause as a means of exerting greater leverage over the BaKwena Chieftainship, whose autonomy within the colonial structure, nonetheless, remained intact prior to 1931.

The emergence of a tenuous alliance between the colonial administration and its BaKwena headmen, based on their common interest in gaining greater control over *bogosi*, increased the two diKgosi's own dependence on the support of their commoner subjects. During the reign of Sebele II this relationship was reflected in his patronage of a "Neo-Traditional" worldview, which challenged wider aspects of white domination, as well as the social pretensions of local Christians. In the end, the

resulting competition between the champions of Christian and Neo-Traditional ideologies over *bogwera* provided a pretext for decisive colonial intervention: Sebele II's sudden banishment. The monarchy's resulting loss of autonomy ultimately compromised the residual ability of *bogosi* to serve either British or BaKwena interests.

The Reign of Sechele II

On January 23, 1911 Sebele I died. He had seemed to be on the road to recovery from prolonged illness when, in late December, he had gone out to his cattlepost where he "received a great shock to his system through using a very strong lotion in his eyes, which someone had in mistake directed him to use."[1] MmaThadi, who had been nursing him throughout his illness, brought him back to Molepolole, where he remained conscious for only a few hours. In the end, according to Miss Partridge, he looked forward to rejoining his parents on the other side of what he called "the dark river." She further cites his dying preoccupation with Psalm 51 as evidence of her own belief in his Christian repentence and salvation.

Whatever may have been the fate of his soul, Sebele's worldly image as a champion of the church benefited from his departure. Where as the L.M.S. annual LMS report for 1911 had rudely stated that "the death of Sebele will not be a great loss for the Church" by 1930 he was being hailed as having

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1. LMS Lewis Feb. 25, 1911. Also Lewis July 7, 1910. Partridge Oct. 4, 1910; and Feb. 3, 1911. (Past eye trouble noted by Wookey, June 1, 1899.) Sebele appears to have undermined his health through overmedication, questionable remedies, and alcohole. In a footnote Chirenje, *History of Northern Botswana*, p. 270, cites the Government Doctor, Donald MacRea's, opinion that he died of liver cirrhosis, while correspondence in BNA SOC confirms that he consumed a variety catalogue medicines, as well as those prescribed a certain "Dr. J. Ramsay," in a vain effort to regain his youthful vigor. He also consulted *dingaka*.

been "a friend of the missionary of the London Missionary Society."[2] His long obituary in the *Diamond Fields Weekly* was a harbinger of a similar post-humous colonial rehabilitation.[3] In it it was noted that the late Chief "was an interesting personality" who had been doted upon by Umzilagazi, taught by Livingstone, entertained by Chamberlain and, *ne plus ultra*, received by Victoria.

In his final year the waning Kgosi had been obsessed with the question of his inheritance.[4] Having become disatisfied with the conduct of Kealeboga, his designated heir, he changed his will so as to leave his royal property to Moiteelasilo, his third son. Willoughby alleges that Sebele had, in fact, long preferred the latter, his eldest by his second wife Ikaeng, who he had groomed for *bogosi* while relegating his senior son "to live a wild life at the cattleposts." On the other hand, given the late Kgosi's conviction that his rule had been compromised by his own lack of higher learning, it is possible that his eleventh hour attempt to alter his line of succession was primarily motivated by academic qualifications.[5] Moiteelasilo, unlike either of his two older brothers, Kealeboga and Kebohula, had had the opportunity to attend secondary school.[6]

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2. *The 116th Report of the London Missionary Society*, p. 288. Skota, p. 89. Most contemporary oral traditions cite his building of the Boraklalo church and abolition of *bogwera* and *bojale* as evidence of his staunch Christianity, which is frequently linked to his visit to London.

3. WCW/SO 739: *Diamond Fields Weekly*, Jan. 28, 1911.

4. LMS Lewis, Feb. 25, 1911. WCW/SO 382, Willoughby "Molepolole at the end of 1916;" and BNA S 25/10, Willoughby to Garrway, Nov. 14, 1916. Also S 5/19, RC to GS, March 24, 1911.

5. See BNA SOC, Sebele to AC(S), June 4, 1908.

6. Moiteelasilo's academic record in Register for Tiger Kloof (years of attendence 1904-08), located in the Tiger Kloof Papers at Moedeng College, Otse. He appears to have been an average student though (his headmaster) Willoughby, WCW/SO 382, later wrote that he was "spoilt" and could not stand the institution's rigor.

Sebele died before he was able to present the question of Moiteelasilo's promotion to a *pitso*. Even had he survived to do so it is uncertain that his wishes would have been accepted; the failure of Seitlhamo to promote Tshosa over Sebele's great-grandfather Legwale was a precedent for rejection, while the controversy over the status of MmaTsolofelo had established the existence of strong support for upholding the rights of her household. As it was the BaKwena, while cognizant of the wishes of their late Kgosi, followed the law of primogenture (within the senior house) by sanctioning Kealeboga's elevation as Sechele II in the hope that "one's name is one's destiny."[7] Eight speakers aligned with the Kgosidintsi faction, however, delivered warnings that they would not support the new ruler if he failed to give up his excessive drinking of *khadi* and otherwise rule in the august manner of his namesake. In his response the Kgosi was contrite: "You have condemned me in your speeches for my conduct in the past, but give me a trial, and see if I do not fulfill your wishes."[8] For its part the colonial government accepted the enthronement and affirmed that Native Law and Custom should take precedence over Sebele's will in the distribution of his estate.[9]

Despite the discordent voices raised at his appointment, the second Sechele's reign began auspiciously with the drawing up of a royal address, which was publicly delivered before the then Acting Resident Commissioner, Barry May, during the

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7. *Leina lebe ke seromo.* BNA S 42/5 AC(S) to RC, Feb. 3, 1911, etc. LMS Partridge, Feb. 3, and Lewis Feb. 25, 1911. Seepapitso II and other, unidentified, diKgosi witnessed the meeting along with the Assistant Commissioner.

8. LMS Prtridge, Feb. 3, 1911.

9. BNA RC 5/19 Act.RC to G.S., March 24, 1911 etc. (This ruling was based on the legal opinion which Willams had solicitated on "Native Marriages" during the controversy over Sebele's treatment of MmaTsolofelo.)

latter's 1911 tour of the Southern Protectorate.[10] This petition reflected an eagerness on the part of the Kgosi and others to forge a new consensus within the community around a progressive call for local development. Sechele began by paying tribute to his father for instituting the educational levy and abolishing *bogwera* and *bojale*, saying that because of these reforms it was now possible for "all Bakwena, Bakgalagadi, and Masarwa" to attend school free of charge.[11] Barrowing from a recent speech by Wookey, he then put forward his proposal for the establishment of an Agricultural College and other "progressive institutions of various kinds." Also requested was the services of a doctor of European medicine, who was especially needed to deal with the threat of such diseases as syphillis, whose growing transmission paralleled the rise of labor migration.

Bakereke sentiment, as well as a possible desire to respond to the then prevailing "Black Peril" hysteria in the Union press, was reflected in a demand that Europeans wishing to take local African wives should be married in Christian ceromonies and, also, since the SeKwena courts were now denied civil jurisdiction over whites, that the government act to penalize those whitemen who engaged in concubinage: "If a whiteman wishes to take a native woman, let him marry her legally, according to the whiteman's law by preference." He then turned to other issues involving local traders. Accusing

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10. Petition in both BNA S 43/2 Sechele II to ARC, Sept. 8, 1911; and LMS Wookey, Dec. 4, 1911, see also Wookey, Aug. 23, and Sept. 18, 1911.

11. In fact probably the only individuals from the Kweneng-Kgalagadi who attended school in Molepolole prior to the 1930s where sons of Seloilwe II, the leader of the BaBolaongwe booModimo at Letlakeng. Gaoonwe Seloilwe's own account of his schooling is in Schapera's "Ethnogrphical Texts in the Boloongwe Dialect," pp. 182-87. Interview w/ Eyes Reokwanang, May 6, 1987. BoSeloilwe also begin to appear on the St. Paul's baptism register from 1922.

the storekeepers of forming rings to fix prices he announced that "Now I shall fix the prices according to my judgement." He further called for a end to the "Goodfors" system, by which his subjects were paid in store credit rather than cash, and requested that the government back him in his restricting the traders from carrying out transactions in the Kweneng-Kgalagadi, arguing that both the spread of goodfors and uncontrolled Kgalagadi trading had had a adverse effect on past Hut Tax receipts.

Sechele II's address is notable for its reception as well as content. In this respect the manner in which certain issues were ignored is as interesting as the fact that others became the subject of a fair amount of outside attention. On one hand the missionaries were impressed by its moral and educational content. Aware of their own failure to live up to Livingstone's medical legacy, they were also supportive of the call for the government to provide health care.[12] On the other hand the *Diamond Fields Advertizer* headlined "The White and Black Peril."[13] For his part, May chose to downplay issues arising from inter-racial "cohabitation," while dimissing the complaints about the business practices of the traders as "trivial." But he took up Sechele's request for a medical doctor, which had been echoed by Seepapitso II, perhaps because the "deplorable" nature "of the Bakwena from a medical

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12. At the time the LMS had been supporting a modest medical dispensory run by Mrs. Lewis, the wife of the local missionary Hayden Lewis who was, herself, a former hospital matron, which in 1906 was providing some 580 BaKwena a month with what essentilly were first aid services- LMS Lewis, Dec. 23, 1913 and *Chronicls of the LMS*, Feb. 1906, pp. 41-42.

13. BNA S 43/2: *Diamond Fields Advertizer* "Can Nothing be Done? The White and Black Peril, Relations of Trader and Native, A Bechuana Chiefs Appeal," Sept. 21; also "White Man's Shame," Sept. 23, 1911. LMS Wookey, Sept. 18; Nov. 7; and Dec. 4, 1911.

point of view" had implications for the future supply of local, taxpaying, laborers.[14] The Medical Officer at Gaberones was temporarily given added responsibility for Kweneng and Gangwaketse pending the recruitment of a private, government subsidized, resident physician for the two reserves (a development which finally occured in 1914.)

The stir caused by Sechele's petition did little to placate the tensions existing between Kgosing and Mokgalo. At the time of its presentation, Baruti, in his own speech before the Kgotla, was critical of the Kgosi: "We are all Sechele's wives and when day after day we sit in the Kgotla and the sun rises high and he does not come to us we feel sad and deserted and sigh for our chief."[15] It must have been obvious to all that there was now once more "two bulls in the kraal."

In the early months of 1912, the split between Sechele and Baruti became open and, as it turned out, irrevocable. By February, the Kgosana was once more lobbying the Assistant Commissoner at Gaberones, Jules Ellenberger, about his ruler's failure to properly respect the social position of a Mohumagadi: Mathadi![16] At the time the widow of Mhiko and Sebele, who Baruti somewhat suspiciously denied being on "intiment terms" with, was engaged in what appears to have been a relatively minor dispute with the son of MmaTsholofelo over the division of both of her husbands' estates. Baruti also spoke of his, and his ally Kgabo Tebele's, clashes in the Kgotla with Sechele "and his advisors whom we do not know and who are his aides-de-camp in Khadi drinking." The supposed leader of the "Khadi drinkers" was, in fact, quite well known, being Baanami whom Sebele had earlier allowed to return from

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14. BNA S 43/2 ARC to HC, Sept. 22, 1911 (2 letters) and HC to ARC, Oct. 25, 1911.
15. BNA 43/2 ARC to HC, Sept. 22, 1911.
16. BNA DCMol 8/3 Baruti to AC(S), Feb. 26, also July 8, 1912.

exile. Baruti wrote that his past support for the repatriation of the BagaMashadi leader as well as his recognition of of new Kgosi, rather than a suitable person "in accordence with Sebele's wishes," had been mistakes. This coincided with intrigues for Sechele's deposition in favor of his brother Kebohula, who would serve as regent for his heir Sebele (II).[17]

Unfortunately for Sechele, the colonial government during his reign did not prove to be as steadfast as it had been under Williams in supporting the principal that the interests of its recognized Chiefs should generally take precedence over those of their local rivals. This inability of the administration to adopt a consistent approach towards the factional conflict undoubtedly aggravated the situation. But the divisions within the *morafe* itself were deeper and more complex than mere disputes over Sechele's khadi drinking, Mathadi's goats, or Baruti's hubris.

By 1912, to begin with the dynastic melodrama, Sechele was becoming increasngly estranged from his first wife, the Mohumagadi-a-Magolo Phetogo. Their marriage, which had been arranged in conformity with the ideal of cross-cousin marriage, had never been happy.[18] Tensions between the two increased when Sechele announced his intention to have Lena Rauwe as his third wife.[19] Although the daughter of the Kgosi of the BaKhurutshe, Lena or MmaTlhalefang (also known as Kaang and Prudence) had recently found refuge with her grandfather, Ntsono, a leading BagaMashadi repatriate who had

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17. LMS Partridge, March 12, 1912. At 20 Sebele was already of age but at the time was studying at Tiger Kloof.

18. WCW/SO 382. Interview w/ Victoria Namane, March 31, 1986.

19. Sechele had by then seperated from his second wife, Kebue Modietsho or MmaLetlamma- LMS Lewis, Feb. 25, 1911. Interviews w/ M.P. Pheto, Aug. 27, 1985 and Kgosi Mac Sechele, April 1, 1987.

a reputation for playing a divisive role in BaNgwato as well as BaKwena affairs.[20] She, accompanied by her daughter, had abandoned her husband Phethu Mphoeng who, supported by his uncle Khama, the overlord of Rauwe, had refused to accept their desertion. For her part, Phetogo was equally opposed to Lena's presence referring to her as "Mokgalajwe a tsena" ("the MoKgalagadi has come") in an apparent aspersion on her BaKhurutse pedigree.[21] By the time Sechele was, himself, openly suspicous that Phetogo was cuckolding him for the favors of Baruti.

Kealeboga's two wives were each formidable individuals in their own right. One important characteristic that they shared was a strong devotion to their respective Christian denominations. Phetogo, the eldest daughter of the great Sechele's deacon son Tumagole, was a local pillar of the L.M.S. establishment. Although some communicants were offended by her reputed "selfishness, contempt for everybody, and duplicity" her status as "first lady of the land" had assured her of a leading place in parish affairs, particularly among its female membership.[22] Throughout her confrontation with her husband Phetogo was able to use the church as her platform, a fact which underscores the institution's significance as a women's organization. Unlike the Kgotla there was no gender barrier to participation within the church assembly, *phutego*, where authority was exercised by a voting majority. By this time

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20. BNA S 25/10, letter to RC, Nov. 14, 1916, credits Ntsono with having been instrumental in the splits between Kgari and Sebele, Baanami and Jacoba, Mphoeng and Rraditldi, as well as latter two and their sons.

21. Interview w/ O. Segakisa, Aug. 27, 1985. Many BaKwena sources speak of her father's people as BaTalaote.

22. WCW/SO 382. Characterization supported by Victoria Namane, interviewed March 31, 1986, and various writings by and about her, most notably those found in BNA DCMol. 5/4 "Phetogo Sechele 1915-39."

women formed a large proportion, if not an absolute majority, of its electorate.[23] The congregational principals of the LMS, when coupled with its secular influence, meant that it could serve as an alternative structure of empowerment for its female members. The role of women in the church was further enhanced in 1914 by the formation of a Women's Guild, which elected its own deaconesses.[24]

Other secular factors also contributed to the church's feminine appeal. Its firm stand in favor of monogamy and the fact that its "white weddings" were legally recognized by civil courts were clearly attractive to first wives eager to uphold their status in the context of apparently growing marital instability caused by labor migration, as well as the continued practice of polygamy. Another lure was the educational role of the church, whose school enrollments continued to be predominately female. At the time, an abilty to read the bible was a prerequisite for full church membership. It is also notable that Mary Partridge, the Headmistress of the Molepolole school between 1895 and 1918, believed that it was her particular mission to promote BaTswana women to their "proper place" as Christians by liberating them from aspects of their gender subordination.[25] To accomplish this goal, she devoted herself to such projects as the creation of a Girl's

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23. In 1914 the Women's Guild had a membership of 102 out of a total congregation of 447, not all women members, however, belonged to the Guild- *Report of L.M.S., 1914*, p. 261. A 1915 list of the BaKwena LMS members, in WCW/SO 374, contains a large number of female names but also many whose gender cannot be easily determined. LMS annual reports for the years 1925-35 show female to male membership ratios of between two and three to one.

24. *Report of the London Missionary Society-1914*, p. 261.

25. Partridge "Becwana Women" *The Chronical of the LMS*, Jan. 1903, pp. 37-38: "But Bechuana women, even the wives of Christians, have none of them their proper place yet. The men have always been taught that they are far superior to women, and they find it hard to part with the notion." etc.

Industrial School and Women's Reading and Bible Classes, which reflected a broader commitment on the part of her Society to what they then referred to as "Women's Work." Indeed at least some of Partridge's male collegues shared in her vision:

> "The women, too, are finding their feet, and are not so ready to be imposed upon, or disposed of. One feels that the seeds are in the hearts of the women, which, when matured, will bring forth a harvest which will astonish the men. We do not hear yet of the 'Suffragette,' but come she will, and the men will find her a very terror when she arrives....'The pecularities of the feminine mind' are likely, through the slow working of evolution, to cause the Bechwana men considerable astonishment, and they will deserve it. I am on the side of the women."[26]

It is important to note that most women who belonged to the LMS were, like Phetogo, drawn from among the ranks of the relatively privileged. Since the days of Sechele, church membership on the part of both genders had been defined by wealth as well as by belief. Besides the costs associated with achieving literacy and otherwise conforming to what was considered to be a Christian lifestyle, members were required to pay an annual subscription or *phalalo*. In 1911 the minimum contribution was increased to, the then not inconsiderable sum of, 10s. for men and 5s. for women.[27] To become a member, one also had to be accepted by the membership of the *phutego* (after a minimum two year period of probation.) These policies perpetuated the existence of two distinct classes among the BaKereke: those who were full members, and an always much larger body of adherents many of whom wished to obtain full membership. Willougby at the time noted: "all through

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26. Edwin Lloyd in *Report of L.M.S., 1913*, p. 266.

27. *Report of L.M.S., 1911*, p. 229. Apparently male contributions covered their wives while the 5s. fee was for females like Phetogo whose husbands were not church members. By 1920 to participate in the *phutego* such women still had to be married in the church.

Becuanaland, membership in an L.M.S. Church puts a touch of distinction upon even the best born in the community and adds much to the strength of a political intriguer."[28] In his observation the missionary was very much aware of the ironic fact that the L.M.S., despite its non-conformist tradition, had become a "political machine":

> "The state establishment of religion cannot fail to exaggerate its externalities and cripple its realities. It has done this wherever it has been tried. But the Becwana have not been content with the state establishment of religion, they have identified religion with the state. This is true of all our stations in Becwanaland."

But whereas in Gangwaketse and Gammangwato the L.M.S. had evolved into an instrument of *bogosi* in Kweneng, since Sechele I's death, it had passed into the hands of the opposition. In this respect it is notable that of the local church's seven male deacons, in 1916, two were brothers and two were sons of Baruti, who himself remained the leader of the BaKereke party despite his well deserved reputation as a philanderer.[29]

Phetogo's rival, Lena, was an early convert and ardent champion of Anglicanism.[30] Up until this time the L.M.S. had continued to enjoy a, royally mandated, church monopoly within Kweneng but Lena was not alone in her sentiments. Local tradition holds that she was attending L.M.S. services when

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28. WCW/SO 382

29. LMS Willoughby (personal) to Hawkins, April 28, 1916. WCW/SO 382. One of Baruti's sons was also the brother-in-law of Phetogo.

30. The two existing general histories on the Anglican Church in Botswana: Theophilus Naledi "The Founding of the Diocese of Botswana" (Master of Theology thesis, Kings College, London 1984) and W.J. Clissold "Bechuanaland Protectorate" in Cecil Lewis and G.E. Edwards *Historical Records of the Church of the Province of South Africa* (SPG, London 1934.)

she noticed another who, like herself, kneeled during prayer.[31] Her fellow worshiper was George Mashwe who had been recruited by his brother-in-law, Sidzumo, to help run of the National School. Mashwe, who like Sidzumo was a member of the elite Mfengu community of former British Bechuanaland, was already a licenced lay reader in the church, having been a student of the noted Anglican missionary Henry Beven.[32] At the time the region's Anglicans, the Church of the Province of South Africa, were enjoying some success in absorbing Ethiopian Church congregations into their fold; Beven, himself, having won over the principal Ethiopianists among the BaRolong at Ganyesa.[33] Another group so incorporated had been the Bakhurutse Free Church, which had been sponsored by Lena's father in opposition to local representatives of the L.M.S.[34] Within Molepolole a group of Ethiopianists, following the death of Sebele, had made a concerted effort to establish themselves as a branch of the Anglican oriented, but independent, African

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31. From discussion on early history of St. Paul's Church Molepolole, Dec. 21, 1986, w/Rev. Osmers, Mrs. B. Hirschfeldt, Kgosi Mac Sechele, and Victor Kgosidintsi.

32. BNA S 42/14 Partridge to J.Ellenberger, Feb. 6, 1912. SPG/CRL Etheridge to SPG, Dec. 18, 1913.

33. SPG/CRL Bevan to Bishop of Bloemfontien, Jan. 14, 1903. At this time the Rev. James Dwane, one of the three founders of the Ethiopian Movement and its first ordained Bishop, had split from his collegues to found the Order of Ethiopia within the Anglican Communion (much original material on this development can be found in issues of *The Mission Field*, the monthly journal of the SPG.)

34. BNA S 178/1. LMS Reed, Sept. 17, 1903, enclosing Report on the Selepeng Inquiry (and follow up correspondence.) Also James Mpotokwane "A Short History of the Bakurutse of King Motebele, Senior Son of King Mohutshe," *Botswana Notes and Records* vol. 6, (1974), pp. 37-46, pp. 42-43. N. Parsons "Independency and Ethiopianism Among the Tswana in the Late 19th and early 20th Centuries," Seminar paper, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, Jan. 29, 1970. Don Boshman "Conflict Between New Religious Movements and the State in the Bechuanaland Protectorate pror to 1945," (Master of Theology thesis, Harvard, 1989) pp. 36-42.

Catholic Church.[35] This movement's local leader was Motswasele Sechele, a former L.M.S. catechist who had been active as an evangelist in the Kweneng-Kgalagadi prior to his suspension for polygamy.[36] Motswasele's early prostelization is notable in that it came at a time when, in the words of Howard Williams, "Preaching the Gospel to the Makhalahari is looked upon as decided democratic movement by all Bechuana, and especially the aristocracy."[37] Upset at L.M.S. indentification with the cause of Phetogo and Baruti, the new Kgosi was at first favorably disposed to his uncle's new Ethiopianist faction, but subsequently he was persauded by Lena and Mashwe to turn instead to the true "Church of George V." In the early months of 1912 he received a silver cross from Bevan, who also had by then begun instructing Motswasele.[38]

To house his denomination Kealeboga Sechele purchased a large brick warehouse, for £ 500, in the Boraklalo from the estate of a local trader.[39] Bishop Winifred Gore-Brown, of the newly established Diocese of Kimberly and Kuruman, thereafter raised another £ 100 from DeBeers for its outfitting as St. Paul's Parish, Molepolole.[40]

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35. BNA S 42/14. LMS Partridge, March 12, 1912. Boshman, p. 66 (citing Keikanetwe Monyai "The African Catholic Church," (Master of Theology thesis, Univ. of South Africa, 1980)) states that the ACC had been formed in 1908 as a splinter of the African Mission Society. Both churches used Anglican vestments, ritual and the Book of Common Prayer (there appearence coincided with disputes over the progress of the Order of Ethiopia's integregration into the Anglican Church.)

36. Schapera, "Ethnographical Texts in the Boloongwe Dialect," p. 185. LMS Lewis, June 28 & July 27, 1912.

37. "The Bakwena Mission" *The Chronicle of the L.M.S.*, new series vol. 6, (1897), pp. 30-33, which further notes that at one point Motswasele's father, Sechele I, "remarked that even the dogs were being fed from the king's table."

38. LMS Lewis, June 28, and July 27, 1912.

39. BNA RC 5/12 RC to J.T. Brown, Dec. 4 & 9, 1913. SPG-CRL Etheridge to SPG, Dec. 13, 1913; and "Annual Report, Southern Rhodesia, 1913. LMS Lewis, July 6, 1913. Interviews w/ S.G. Masimega, July 25, 1985 & Rev. Molokwe, Dec. 17, 1985.

The parish quickly gained a large following. Many undoubtedly simply followed their Kgosi's lead. Among these loyalists was Ntshono and other BagaMashadi repatriates who harboured their own personal antagonisms towards the church of their Mokgalo rivals. As elsewhere in Southern Africa, there were also Ethiopianist-oriented individuals who were attracted by the church's Anglo-Catholic tradition, then being championed by missionaries like Beven, which, in contrast to the rigid Protestantism of the L.M.S., combined an emphasis on the value of Apostolic succession and "high church" ritual with a relative tolerence for many indigenous social practices. Another source of strength was education. Under Mashwe's leadership a St. Paul's school was soon established superceding the first National School. But probably the largest group to flock to the "Chief's church," were L.M.S. adherents alienated by that body's exclusionary practices. Between 1911 and 1913, as the Anglican's catechumens list swelled, the number of local L.M.S. adherents dropped from 565 to 25, while its membership, that is those who paid *phalalo* and were entitled to participate in the *phutego*, remained relatively stable, declining from 442 to 403.[41]

While Mashwe assumed de facto control over St. Paul's, Motswasele, with Sechele's blessing, aggressively challenged the L.M.S for the allegiance of the *meratswane* and BaKgalagadi communties at Mmankgodi, Kumakwane, Letlakeng, and Dultwe. Hayden Lewis, the resident L.M.S. missionary, was not inclined towards ecumenical tolerance of such "predatory practices." To

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40. The Anglicans probably included Kuruman in the Bishop's title for its historic association with the spread of (L.M.S.) Christianity in the region; their first parish at Kuruman was not established until 1915: SPG-CRL Jules Clements, Diocesen Sec., to Sec. SPG, Feb. 3, 1916. St. Paul's, with some renovation and modification, has remained on the same site.

41. *Annual Report of the London Missionary Society* 1911- p. 228, and 1913- p. 364.

him the growth of the "new cult" was based upon nothing more than its "immoral and mischivious conduct" of "bribary, plunder, and poaching."[42] Having already joined forces with Baruti and Partridge in backing Phetogo, Lewis now encouraged his congregation to seek the overthrow of their Kgosi and his "Church of Adulterers."[43] On at least one occassion Lewis's followers are said to have besieged the Anglican church in an attempt to disrupt services.[44] On April 2, 1913 fifty prominent men of the *phutego* took the further step, at a gathering in their church, of petitioning the Resident Commissioner: "The Chief has thrown off the Church of the tribe, namely, the London Missionary Society; he annoys our congregation and threatens to take way its members as well as the children going <sic> our school." They also denounced Sechele's alleged illtreatment of Phetogo, "our mother," tolerence of khadi drinking, and failure to heed their advice: "The Chief has nothing to do with his headmen, his works are being conducted and known by such men as Ntsono, Moikabi and Motshwasele Sechele....poor people whose object is to amass wealth by ruining the nation." The petition, coupled with Lewis's lobbying, caught the B.P. administrtion's attention. In attempt to difuse tensions, while his staff evaluated the situation, the Resident Commissoner, Panzera, intervened to prevent Bishop Gore-Brown from making his scheduled May visit to St. Paul's for the purpose of its consecration.[45]

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42. LMS Lewis, June 28, July 27, 1912, and June 6, 1913.

43. LMS Lewis June 6, 1913. BNA DC Mol. 8/3, which includes anti-Sechele petition and various correspondence by Baruti, Lewis, and colonial administrators for period between Feb. 1912 and June 1913. At one point Lewis, to Ellenberger, Jan. 14, caught the Administration's attention by charging that white children were being "molested by blacks as they do errands for their parents." Although their quickly proved to be little substance to this allegation it resulted in the permanent stationing of a white NCO at Molepolole- AC(S) to GS, Feb. 13, and OC, Lt. Mosely, to AC(S), Feb. 10, 1913.

44. Conversation w/ Kgosi Mac Sechele (and others) at St. Paul's, Dec. 21, 1986.

It is a reflection of Lewis' naivete as well as bigotry that he, along with his local confederates, hoped that the B.P. authorities would impose an outright ban on Anglican activity. Although the administration had in the past demonstrated a willingness to suppress, on political grounds, independent African led denominations, it was quite out of the question for them to take similar longterm measures against the agents of one of His Majesty's Bishops in a Reserve where he had been invited by the Chief; notwithstanding the Resident Commissoner's own feeling that: "It is much to be regreted that the party which includes most of the drunkards and undesirables is housed and sheltered under the Cloak of the Church of England."[46]

A month after the appearance of the petition Panzera met with Sechele.[47] While reminding the Kgosi that friction among his subjects had once nearly led to his father's removal he affirmed that: "The Church of England is my church but I do not want to force either one church or another on the tribe. But when one makes religious matters an excuse for political matters and dissensions that is different." He also observed that the emergence of troubles in the Protectorate could only serve to hasten the day of its incorporation into the Union.

Two months after the above meeting, James MacGregor, as Acting Resident Commissioner, traveled to Molepolole were he concluded that the "considerable minority" who opposed Sechele were made up exclusively of prominent L.M.S. members who had been incited by Lewis.[48] The missionry, along with his "malcontents," were subsequently warned "politely but firmly"

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45. LMS Lewis June 6, 1913 & "Molepolole Annual Report, 1913."
46. BNA DCMol 2/11 RC to AC(S), Dec. 23, 1914.
47. Minutes of the meeting in BNA DCMol. 8/3.
48. BNA S 1/7 (also PRO CO 879/113/1003) Act.RC to HC, Aug. 4, 1913.

to drop their opposition to the Anglicans while Sechele was privately told that it would be wise "for the present" to restrict the new church to Molepolole.[49] The Kgosi and Kgotla were similarly prodded to outlaw khadi: a ban was imposed but not enforced.[50] Apparently concerned about Canon Beven's populist appeal the administration also quitely moved to have the entire Protectorate fall under the authority of the Bishop of Matebeleland and Mashonaland (Southern Rhodesia.)[51] Thus, instead of Gore-Brown, St. Paul's was visited by the Archdeacon Etheridge of Salisbury who left impressed by the growth of his church's "startling fruit" in the "dry hot country" of Bechuanaland.[52] Although the administration's initiatives were insufficient to fully bridge the interdenominational rift they were for the most part welcomed by all parties.[53]

MacGregor's visit is also significant in that it apparently marks the beginning of the end of Peter Sidzumo's career as Tribal Secretary. Followng the tour Merivale Drury,

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49. BNA S 1/7 ARM Kanye to Act.RC, July 22, 1913.

50. BNA S 1/7. A seperate DCMol file on the Khadi Law, 1913-15, was among papers, preserved and dispatched to Salisbury in 1958, which have since disappeared, see S 458/8.

51. BNA RC 5/12 RC to J.T. Brown, Dec. 9, 1913.

52. SPG-CRL-SR Etheridge to SPG, Dec. 18, 1913 & "Annual Report, 1913" p. 144. In contrast Lewis, LMS "Molepolole Annual Report, 1913": "who sent Archdeacon Etheridge, to float the Anglican Dreadnought, and start it in an offcial way upon its cruise of prostelization among L.M.S. crews. I think he found that he had a wooden ship to float which had long long ago had become beer-logged, and that its crew, a mutinous crowd, were not prepared to put to sea, unless their numerous wives had suitable quarters provided for them."

53. However Lewis, LMS Oct. 13, and Dec. 23, 1913, was bitter at the officials for sanctioning the presence of his rivals: "an Administration which, Ellenberger excepted, should be washing cloths instead of governing nations." During the same month Panzera, BNA RC 5/12, RC to J.T. Brown, Dec. 9, 1913, found it necessary to assert Anglican rights in response to the LMS Southern District Committee's further protest against the denomination.

the appointed Assistant Magistrate at Kanye, was instructed to keep a close eye on Molepolole developments.[54] In his first report Drury wrote: "Sechele is far to pliable in Sidzumo's hands and I am afraid Sidzumo is a traitor....I should like to see Sidzumo replaced by a better man."[55] Thereafter Tribal Secretary disappears from the scene, though it is not known whether he was formally deported, or simply left.[56]

The majority of the residents of Kweneng were non-Christians who initially must have been only marginally interested in the feud between the two churches. Between 1909 and 1914 it was severe drought, not ecclesiastical politics, that gripped the land and its people.[57] The temporary return of rain in the austral summer of 1914-15 was accompanied by an apparent widening of social conflict. In response to the moral, political, and financal support given to Phetogo by Lewis and Partridge, Sechele began to assert his temporal authority over the Society's local representatives:

> "Missionary Willoughby, I tell you I have expelled Mr. Lewis from here. I have expelled him because of his habits. When he came here I thought he was a Missonary: I did not know that he had come to teach people to curse one another and to become lawyers and to teach women folk to wander about without the permission of their husbands, just as

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54. In addition to its concerns about Sechele the Administrtion at the time feared that Seepapitso II was "inclined to take what may be called the Ethiopin view of most questions affecting white and black, and to regard all Europeans, including ourselves, with some suspicion. He needs careful handling..." - BNA S 1/7 (also S 493/12 and PRO CO 879/113/1003) Act.RC to HC, Aug. 4, 1913. See also LMS Willoughby Jan. 29, 1914.

55. BNA S 1/7 ARM Kanye to Act.RC, July 22, 1913.

56. His subsequent career is also a mystery. In this respect it is notable that administrative records for the period housed at Kanye and Gaberones were destroyed by fires.

57. See Lewis's account of the drought in *Report of the L.M.S., 1914*, p. 260, also in LMS "Annual Reports, 1913" (quoted in Intoduction, p. 33.)

> you have heard how he has spoken about my quarrel with Phetogo. And I have told the Assistant Commissioner that I expel him, and he said I should tell his elders about that. And I inform you so. And you, too, I hear it said that you are coming here; but I say I will never at any time see you here with my eyes."[58]

To enforce his will the Kgosi at one point threatened to sieze church buildings constructed through communal labor and levys.[59] At the behest of his colonial superiors Sechele backed down.[60] Willoughby was allowed to stay in Molepolole where, as had been feared, he emulated his predessor by meddling in dynastic affairs. Through his investigations into local law, custom, and history he also became a valued intelligence source to the authorities in Mafikeng.[61] A month after the missionary cum colonial ethnographer's arrival, he was joined by Harold Neale, the first Assistant Resident Magistrate for Molepolole.[62] The latter's appearence meant that the BaKwena Kgosi was for the first time answerable to a higher authorty living within his territory.

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58. Translation of the letter in LMS Willoughby, Nov. 16, 1914. Seepapitso II also complained to the L.M.S. at about the same time about the appointment of Albert Jennings to his town without his approval- Jennings, Feb. 4, 1915.

59. LMS Willoughby March 9 (also 30,) 1915: "Lewis tells me that some years ago-- about the time tht the Molepolole church was beng built-- he sent to Dr. Thompson paper signed by Sebele stating that the Church was built for the L.M.S.; that it was not drawn up by a lawyer and was far from legal form; and that Dr. Thompson said it ws not worth the paper it was written on."

60. BNA DCMol 2/11 "L.M.S.: Request by Sechele that the Rev. Willoughby should not be stationed at Molepolole." Also LMS Willoughby, Jan. 7 and March 30, 1915.

61. BNA S 25/10 Willoughby to Garraway, Nov. 14, 1916. Also S 26/1.

62. BNA S 43/2 ARMol to AC(S), April 27, 1915 (Neale had arrived in February.)

In August 1915 Sechele, naming Baruti as a co-respondent, sucessfully sued Phetogo for divorce on the basis of adultry.[63] For the BaKwena the divorce of a Mogumagadi-a-mogolo was unprecedented and thus especially controversial in its implications.[64] Phetogo initially found significant support for her contention that her customary perogatives remained unaltered and she refused to evacuate the royal household. Another source of dissension was the presiding magistrate's finding that both parties had been guilty of adultry. To a society that largely accepted polygamy and serial marriage, but upheld the sanctity of "the Queen's bedchamber," this judgement was significant insofar as it supported Sechele's longstanding charges against Baruti. A few months earlier the Kgosi had unsuccessfully sought to exile his rival to Kwenen, a cattlepost hamlet along the BaKwena-BaKgatla border.[65]

After the hearing Partridge and Willoughby, upset that Sechele alone had benefited from legal counsel, assisted Phetogo in obtaining lawyers for a possible appeal. Shortly thereafter, the Mohumagadi filed for her ex-husbands civil imprisonment citing his alleged negligence in supporting her. For the missionaries, the issue had remained a simple contest between a good Christian and a bad backslider, whose actions

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63. BNA DCMol 5/4 and C-8/723 (RC Court Records "Phetogo vs. Sechele") which contain their first divorce agreement dated Aug. 20, 1915. Other divorce papers in DCMol 8/3, S 25/10 (nb. S 24/8 "Sechele vs. Baruti" not found at BNA, apparently among the files sent to Rhodesia in the mid-1970's and never returned.) Also WCW/SO 382 and various Molepolole correspondence in LMS.

64. Somewhat earlier, c. 1911, Sechele's peer Sepapitso II had established the precedent within the Protectorte by divorcing of his senior wife Mogatsakgari or Ofetotse Ratshosa (MmaBathoen.), a 6 page statement by Mogatskgari on the matter can be found in the Khama Papers filed under L.M.S. 1906-20.

65. BNA S 43/2 ARMol to AC(S), April 27, 1915. LMS Willoughby, April 28, 1916 p.3

were, moreover, seen as a threat to the status of Christian marriage. They failed to fully consider the possibility that their "good friend" Baruti might be guilty of what in almost any monarchical system was a serious political as well as moral offense. While Willoughby was aware of Baruti's reputation he placed his confidence in the members of his *phutego* who, with some absentions, had voted to absolve the couple. To the missionary this verdict included the judgements of "the men whose influence in the town is greatest on account of their rank."[66]

Willoughby's social analysis is consistant with the fact that in the aftermath of the divorce the BaKwena were became increasingly polarized between an elite minority in opposition to, and a popular majority in favor of, the Kgosi. Two controversial royal initiatives helped to encourage this trend: Sechele's decision to remove his Kgotla to his namesake's old headquarters at Ntsweng and his sanctioning of the revival of *bogwera*.[67] Initially the Kgosi's desire to move to the hill was cooly received by most of his subjects. In addition to his established opponents, who were concentrated within the RaTshosa as well as Mokgalo wards, most of the rest of his people were reluctant to go to the trouble and expense of moving the relatively short distance mearly on account of their leader's domestic troubles. Some had by then built substantial "zinc houses" for themselves, while even the reconstruction of roundevals called for a considerable

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66. BNA S 25/10 Willoughby to RC, Garraway, Nov. 14, 1916. LMS Willoughby, April 28, 1916

67. According to Micheal Seboni, *Kgosi Sebele II* (J.L. van Shaik, Pretoria 1956)(rare SeTswana text. Microfiche copies (available through Pretoria State Library) in Univ. of Botswana Library and BNA) chapter 6, paragrph 2, Sechele II did not authorize the revival of *bojale*, female initation, because it was not practiced in the Bible.

investment of material and labor.[68] Opposition was also fanned by local traders and churchmembers, of both denomintions, all of whom did not wish to abandon their buildings.[69] In April 1915, the Kgosi abandoned any idea of ordering a general move.[70] He thereafter consistently adhered to the policy, which had been urged on him by the Resident Commissioner as well as members of his council, that the removal be voluntary.

As with the periodic struggles over *bogwera*, the question of who within a given lineage or ward was entitled to make the choice of whether or not to remove became a source of controversy. Initially the Kgosi settled into his grandfather's former dwelling surrounded by only a small group of loyalists and servants.[71] Subsequently he called upon the Difetlhamelo and other principal kgotla of Kgosing along with his brothers, Kebohula and Moiteelasilo, to join him. Some, led by the BagaMashadi repatriates, did. Others, including the royal siblings, stayed behind along with most of the kgotla falling

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68. The "zinc" refers to their metal roofs. The houses would generally have been multi-roomed dwellings with square walls of either stone or mud brick.

69. The L.M.S. members were much closer to unaminity than the Anglicans in their opposition. For the role of traders see BNA DCMol 2/10 "Messrs. M.L. and A. Hirschfeld, complaint by Sechele."

70. BNA S 43/2 ARMol. to AC(S), April 27, 1915.

71. Sechele II had inheirited the house at the time of his grandfather's death- BNA S 25/10 Meeting between Sechele II and Act. GS, Dec. 20, 1916. According to L. Knoble, p. 62, Sechele I had requested "that his body should be buried on the spot where he always slept, in his room, and that his grandson, Kealeboga, Sebele's eldest son, should sleep on the grave." S.G. Masimega, interviewed July 25, 1985, claims that after Sebele I had removed to the valley a few BaKwena had always remained at the hill.

under the Ntloedibe, Mokgalo, and RaTshosa wards.[72] In February 1916, about two-thirds of the entire community was still living in the valley, though Mmamorepo Mhaladi, the leader of Mauntlhala, and Waboraro Motsatsi, the other senior Kgosana within the Ntla-ya-Tlase grouping, were then preparing to relocate.[73] The situation was further complicated by the fact that many lineages had begun to fragment. The usual pattern in such cases was for junior brothers to declare their independence from the direct authority of their seniors by simply moving away from them.[74] Sechele's populist appeal, and willingness to promote junior brothers as section leaders, is said to have encourged this process. Noted Willoughby: "He is credited with saying that where he is there are no big people and little people; that he is the chief and all others are on one level."[75]

Another significant development related to the removal was the rise in prominence of Richard Sidzumo, who assumed his brother's former post of Tribal Secretary in the early part of 1915, and George Mashwe. As the principal figures within the National Office, which remained at Borakalalo, they managed to keep the BaKwena administration functioning while, on matters such as the continued threat of incorporation into the Union and control over education, preserving something of

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72. Kebohula actually joined Sechele at the hill but then returned to Borakalalo- BNA S 25/10. As the senior ward BoNtloedibe was expected to live apart, though in proximity to, the rest of the village and thus was left undisturbed at Boribamo adjacent to the Borakalalo- Interview w/ Majaasuma Motlhbani, Oct. 11, 1986. BNA DCMol 7/4. S 300/8. (Uncatalogued) SF/23:N/5/5 (in context of Kgari Sechele's subsequent attempt to remove the ward.)

73. BNA S 25/10 ARMol to AC(S) Feb. 11, 1916.

74. BNA S 25/10 Willoughby to RC, Nov. 7 & 14, 1916. WCW/SO 382. DCMol 3/1 "Mosarwa Mhiko protests against Kgotla proceedings" (which underscores the fact that sisters were not disinterested parties.) Interviews w/ O. Segakisa, Aug. 27, and Majaasuma Matlhabani, Oct. 8, 1985; S.G. Masimega, Jan. 13, 1986.

75. BNA S 25/10 Willoughby to RC, Nov. 14, 1916.

Peter Sidzumo's progressive legacy. Their standings were not entirely confined to their formal role as agents of *bogosi*. As the de facto leader of the Anglican church Mashwe was able to develop his own local power base. Richard Sidzumo was regonally prominent as the Secretary General of the Bechuanaland and Griqualand Provincial Congress (of the South African Native National Congress.) The two also attracted natural allies among the of young men who had been privileged of attend secondary school across the border. Members of this small intelligentsia were beginning to assert themselves at the Kgotla and within the churches as well as the Young Men's Debating Society, which had been established with L.M.S. sponsorship in 1913.[76] Notable among these "new men" was Martinus Seboni who, along with Kagiso Kgabo, often served as Sechele's secretary at Ntsweng.

The influence of Mashwe and Sidzumo was not without its critics. At one point, a number of the L.M.S. notables refused to pay their Hut Tax to the former, saying that they objected to entering into his office as it was located at the Anglican Church.[77] Another complaint against the duo was their foriegn, Cape AmaMfengu, origen. Baruti on one occassion protested that the BaKwena had "never been ruled by Letebele."[78] Such grumbles did not escape the attention of colonial officials who, as with Peter Sidzumo, were themselves uneasy about having such capable, independent-minded, individuals in the service of one of their Chiefs.

The abolition of the *bogwera* had never been popular among the majority of BaKwena. Agitation for its restoration was especially strong in the *meratswane* communities at Gabane, Kopong, and Mmankgodi. In the last village, a serious case of

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76. *Report of the London Missonary Society- 1914*, p. 261.
77. BNA AC(S) 6/16, ARMol. to AC(S), July 20, 1915.
78. BNA DCMol 2/14 ARM to Chief & Council, Sept. 20, 1916.

unrest had broken out earlier, in 1908. There Sentso Legong, a respected rainmaker and self-styled Prophet, organized his own school in defiance of the ban, but with the acquiesence of the local ruler, Letlole Thobega.[79] Offering rain to his followers and lightening to his enemies, Sentso is alleged to have preached that the abandonment of European ways would lead to the overthrow of European oppression, and its local agency the BaKwena Chief. By July he was the de facto leader of Mmankgodi. His informal reign was brief. After setting fire to the village chapel, which had already lost all but two of its members to his movement, he was apprehended by Sebele.[80]

In the aftermath of the sensational events of "the year of Sentso," as it came to be remembered, the *bogwera* was supressed. A number of factors account for the upsurge of support for the initiation in 1915.[81] One element was undoubtedly the *bogwera* cycle itself. A new generation had arisen to demand their rite of passage. Among these young lions was Sechele II's eldest son Kelebantse, the future Sebele II, who, having for a variety of reasones gone into self-imposed exile in Johnnesburg, made his own initiation a precondition for returning. This rising agitition for initiation fit in well with the Kgosi's own traditionalist sentiments, which were probably accentuated by a personel

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79. Hayden Lewis "Sencho, The Mad Prophet" in *Chronicle of the L.M.S.*, April 1913, pp. 91-92. BNA SOC Sebele to AC(S) June 19, July 28, and Aug. 3 & 8, 1908; Sebele to Letlole Thobega, June 17, and Aug. 6, 1908; Sebele to Kgosi Baitlotle, June 19, 1908; Sebele to Segale, Aug. 7, 1908. Also for related Gangwaketse events: LMS Howard William "Kanye Annual Report-1908." and Schapera "The Political Annals of a Tswana Tribe" in *Communications from School of African Studies*, new series no. 18 (Univ. of Cape Town, Nov. 1947), pp. 26-27.

80. According to Majaasuma Matlhabani, interviewed Oct. 8, 1985, Sentso had been one of Sebele's *ngaka* during the 1890s but had been expelled because the Kgosi saw his people looking to Sentso rather than himself to make rain.

81. WCW/SO 382. BNA S 190/5 Sechele II to AC(S), Aug. 24, 1915. M. Seboni, chapters 2 and 4.

desire to curry favor with the majority of his subjects, while vexing his uncircumcised opponents. As early as January of 1913 he is said to have vowed that he would show the "little boys" (*mosimanyane*) not to waste their time trying to control him.[82] Support for the intiation rites also came, somewhat unexpectedly, from Fr. Joseph Deacon, the new Anglican missionary, who also endorsed other traditional practices such as *bogadi*.[83] Thus, in March 1916, the MaRatakgosi or "those who love the Kgosi" began their period of training.[84] The following year another regiment, the MaAtswakgotla or "those who come from the Kgotla," was also initiated.[85]

The onset of the initition of the MaRatakgosi was closely followed by two developments that served to further trouble the socio-political environment: the public exposure of Phetogo's pregnancy by Baruti and the appointment of the first BaKwena Tribal Council (BTC) Phetogo's condition surfaced in April 1916, while she was trying to obtain medicines for an abortion.[86] Public scorn was directed not only at the guilty couple, whose public influence waned, but also at the Church which had for so long backed them. The Mohumagadi, though not her household, lost her position and was ordered to leave Kgosing and join her lover, who was,

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82. BNA 8/3 Lewis to AC(S) Jan. 14, 1913.

83. WCW/SO 382. Clissold: M.S., p.55 and in *Historical Records*, p. 509.

84. LMS Willoughby March 21, 1916. M. Seboni, chapter 4. Interviews w/ Peloentle Dihutso July 10, Soi & James Morueng Aug. 14, and O. Segkisa, Aug. 27, 1985. The regiment's leder was Wabararo Motsatsi.

85. Date confirmed by Khama's protest to Sechele II, March 31, 1917 in Khama Papers. Its leader was Sechele's third son Padi, RraBonewamang.

86. WCW/SO 382. LMS Willoughby April 28, & August 29, 1916. BNA S 25/10 Section "B" & "C"; DCMol. 5/4 ARMol to Act.GS, Aug. 8, 1916 and Phetogo to Sebele II, April 28, 1921. Also DCSerowe 32/21. S 225/14. Interviews w/ M.P. Pheto, Aug. 28, 1985; Victoria Namane, March 31; and S.G. Masimega, Nov. 13, 1986.

himself, heavily fined.[87] Their son, the future Kgosi Molaodi or Neale, was thus denied Sechele's recognition and began his life as Baruti's bastard.

The formation of the BaKwena Tribal Council was first muted by MacGregor, once again the Acting Resident Commissioner, in his report of his visit to Molepolole in March 1916.[88] During his stay he was was not greeted by Sechele, who remained at one of his cattleposts, citing ill health. In the context of past absenteeism on the part of the Kgosi and the fractured nature of local politics, the incident led MacGregor to call for a body that could transact business in the ruler's name.[89] In May 1916 the Kgosi, who apparently was indeed in poor health, embraced the idea. Shortly thereafter, the Kgotla appointed his brothers Kebohula, Moiteelaslo, and Tidi to act as his helpers. The ease with which the Tribal Council, the first body so entitled in the Protectorate, was accepted is a reflection of the fact that neither the Kgosi nor most of his subjects looked upon it as being a departure from the then existing practice divolving responsibility upon royal relatives when the circumstances warranted. In their eyes the only "Tribal Council" was the royal Kgotla. The three brothers were thus seen by most BaKwena as no more than the Kgosi's special advisors or helpers, *Bagakolodi ba Kgosi*. On the other hand the British envisioned the BTC as a possible model for tightening their administrtive control over other Reserves under the rule of what they considered to be weak and/or troublesome Chiefs. This colonial view quickly proved to be an illusion.

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87. This judgement was initially delayed by B.P. administration for under civil law Phetogo being a divorcee was guilty of no offense while her first, provisional, divorce agreement had entitled her to certain properties etc. The matter was reconciled by a second settlement in March of 1917.
88. BNA S 1/7 Act.RC to HC, March 31, 1916.
89. Papers relevant to first BTC. in BNA S 25/10.

The two active members of the first Council, Kebohula and Moiteelasilo, almost immeditely found themselves working at cross purposes with Sechele due to their refusal to join him on the hill. The Kgosi, undoubtedly cognizant of Moiteelasilo's past grooming for power, soon began to have second thoughts. Interpreting his brothers defiance as as a challenge he moved to effectively undermine their authority. This task was facilitated by a revival in his health and the fact that, in the wake of Baruti's downfall, the majority of his subjects had shifted to Ntsweng. By September 1916, Neale noted that "the Council is losing adherents rapidly." During the following month, a series of *letsholo* meetings were called which formally sanctioned the removal of the Kgotla to the hill. The Council members failure to attend these hunts- they claimed that they feared for their safety- underscored their isolation while providing the Kgosi with grounds for their dismissal.

Sechele's demand that the Council be abolished and that the Kgotla at Ntsweng be accepted as his center of authority were taken up at public meeting attended by Edward Garraway, the Resident Commissioner, which was held at the government "Camp," that is the grounds of the Molepolole Magistrate and Police compound, in November 1916.[90] During the lengthy discussion that ensued it became clear that the Kgosi, with his long estranged son Sebele at his side, enjoyed the upperhand. Even his archrival Motswakhumo, who in the aftermath of his brother Baruti's downfall was the leading Mokgalo spokesman, stated that: "The Council has not helped but the reverse." Although the Commissioner had said he only wanted to "listen to the Chief and Headmen and more 'important men'", among the many voices raised on behalf of the Kgosi were a considerable number who were identified as either

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90. BNA S 25/10 (includes minutes of the meeting.)

"servants" or "mere serfs" in the colonial analysis of the gathering.[91] From the testimony it was clear to Garraway's assistant, Jules Ellenberger, that under the circumstances either the Council or the Chief would have to go and that with "our troops being engaged elsewhere" (by the first World War) the time was not favorable for the latter step.[92] Noting Loch's promise, at Crocodile Pools in 1890, that the diKgosi "would be allowed to deal with all matters arising among their own people," Ellenberger followed the past logic of Ralph Willams in concluding that "the least we interfere with native Chiefs in their internal affairs the better."

Ellenberger's memo was accepted in full. The BTC, now described by Garraway as "not only a failure but a menace to the peace of the tribe" was abandoned and Sechele was allowed to consolidate his positiion at Ntsweng.[93] But the Goverment was determined to enforce its will on one issue that had not been raised- the removal of Mashwe and R. Sidzumo from the Protectorate.[94] The two were deported under the provisions of the 1907 Expulsion Law. Beyond implying that the action had been taken at the behest of the Anglican Church and disatisfied BaKwena, the Government made little effort to

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91. The terms were employed by Willoughby who, in response to Garraway's request, prepared a detailed assessment w/ margin notes of the minutes- in BNA S 25/10.

92. Memo by Act.GS, Nov. 7, 1916. (Ellenberger, like Willoughby, also contributed margin notes to the minutes of the meeting.) Garraway had in fact begun the meeting by thanking Sechele for his offer "of men to go to France."

93. BNA S 25/10 RC to HC, Nov. 8, 1916. At least part of this reluctance was due to the location of the Camp which was adjacent to the Borakalalo.

94. BNA S 25/10 RC to HC, Jan. 17, 1917 etc. Also DCMol 2/10 & 14, 4/12. The government also initially sought to remove two "alien witchdoctors" named Ponto and Mese.

justify its action.[95] Mashwe's removal was especially resented.[96] He had married a MoKwena and was now generally accepted as a member of the community even by those who were opposed to his influence. For the remainder of his reign Sechele, with the backing of the leading members of all of the *morafe's* principal factions, protested and petitoned for his *moruti's* restoration.[97]

After three months of declining health, the Kgosi died during the first week of February 1918.[98] In the words of Micheal Seboni, he left the BaKwena "as divided as the branches of a tree," with some so full of hatred for one another that they "could not even give each other water and fire."[99] While concluding that the late Kgosi had "caused problems," Seboni further observed that it would be an error to think that "the Kgosi found peace but failed to preserve it." By then, he noted, Christianity had already broken the unity of the people resulting in a long term clash between

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95. Although the then departing Fr. Deacon had been at odds with Mashwe, his Bishop, Gore-Brown, after seeking an explanation from the government traveled to Molepolole to personally disassociate the Church from the action- BNA S 4/12. The administration also sought to exploit Baruti's remark about being ruled by "Letebele" but he himself repudiated it- S 25/10 Sechele II RC, Sept. 27,(w/ 17 others including Baruti), and Oct. 5, 1917.

96. Gore-Brown noted of the local reaction to the news: "There was a great wailing on Sunday after the Service at which I told the people and at the school the next morning."

97. See in particular BNA S 25/10 Sechele II & 17 others to RC, Sept. 27, 1917, which, citing Sebele I's past correspondence, sought to specificly reopen the question of the Expulsion Law.

98. BNA S 23/3

99. M. Seboni, chapter 5, pargraphs 1-2. Michael Seboni (1912-75) is best remembered for his literary and linguistic contributions but, in addition to *Kgosi Sebele II*, he published two other short, SeTswana, biographies on Kgosi Isang Pilane and Dr. S.M. Molema. In his forward to *Kgosi Sebele II* he noted: "The history of the Batswana *merafe* is very scanty....this is why I have taken the trouble of completing the little remnents that are left of main leaders so that they might never disappear from our minds."

those favoring "traditional culture" and European style "civilization."[100] For the most part the Fort Hare Professor understood this clash as simply a contest between old ways and new. In this respect he, guided by his own Protestant mission sentiment, failed to appreciate was that it was the exposure to *thuto*, itself, and the other socalled ways of the white man, which motivated some of "those Bakwena who mixed western values with our traditional values without having the foresight of the consequences of their actions."[101] Such a person was Sechele's heir Sebele II.

The "Neo-Traditionalist"

> "I recall Chief Sebele, who had served in the Native Labour Contigent during the First World War....Built on light lines, and wearing spectacles, Sebele looked more than nything else like a highly strung student. His house and huts in Molepolole were furnished in European style, and he is very proud of his armoury of many different types of guns and rifles. When he felt in the mood, he played his expensive piano with some feeling. He was certainly a man of temperament and might be regarded as that type of the higher-bred native who, willy-nilly, has been subjected to the white civilizing process."- Julian Mockford.[102]

> "Although at that time politics and Independence were a long way off, we were aware, when we returned, that we were different from the other people at home. Our behaviour, as we showed the South Africans, was something more than they expected from a Native, more like what was expected among them from a white man."- Stimela Jingoes (on the return of the South African Native Labour Contigent from France.)[103]

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100. M. Seboni, chapter 1, paragraph 2.
101. M. Seboni, chapter 10, pargraph 12.
102. Mockford, p. 75.
103. John & Cassandra Perry (edits.) *A Chief is a Chief by the People: The Autobiogrphy of Stimela Jason Jingoes* (Oxford Univ. Press 1975) p. 92.

Sebele II, also known as Kelebantse ("I do the right thing"), was enthroned by the Kgotla on February 12, 1918.[104] His uncle Kebohula, who presided over the installation, warned him to rule in accordence with the three "rocks" of *bogosi*: the Law tempered by Justice and Understanding. At the time of his corontion the second Sebele was twenty-six years old, making him the first of the post-World War I generation of Protectorate diKgosi, which would also include Tshekedi, Bathoen II (along with his regent Ntebogang), and Molefi, all of whom the British would find troublesome. The young MoKwena had, himself, just returned from France where he had served as a corporal in the South African Native Labour Contigent.[105] The BaKwena praised their new leader with stories such as how he had been thanked by George V for his help in fighting the hated Kaiser (whose cruelty they knew from the tales of the "Damara" refugees as well as wartime propaganda.)[106] But the Resident Commissioner, MacGregor, in a wire to the High Commissioner that same day, noted the new Kgosi's veteren status along his alleged heavy drinking and instability in observing that he might need a regent.[107] He also recommended

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104. BNA S 23/3 RMol to RC, Feb. 12, 1918.

105. M. Seboni, chapters 3 & 4. Interviews w/ Kobedi Seribe, Aug. 5; Sol & James Moruamang, Aug. 14; M.P. Pheto, Aug. 27, Samson Gower, Aug. 28; Sengwato Mokgadi, Sept. 9; Peloentle Dihutso, Oct. 7; Majaasuma Matlhabani, Oct. 7, 1985; and S.G. Masimega, April 1, 1886. Most papers on Contigent are in South African Archives (not seen), limited material in: BNA RC 1/29, DCMol 4/11, and file on the war in Isang Papers at Phutadikobo Museum, Mochudi.

106. Albert Grundlingh, *Fighting Their Own War* (Raven, Johannesburg 1987), p. 125, confirms that the King did indeed address the Contigent on July 10, 1917 telling them: "You are also part of my great armies fighting for the liberty and freedom of my subjects of all races and creeds throughout the Empire." Most of the "Damara" were OvaHerero followers of Samual Maherero who settled at Gabane, c.1905-22, before removing to Mahalapye- BNA DCMol. 2/3 "Damaras in the Bakwena Reserve."

107. BNA S 23/3 RC to HC, Feb. 12, 1918. Also S 210/7 draft "indictment" of Sebele II.

that, for the time being, formal recognition of the new Chief by London should be witheld. The Commissioner's concern may, at least in part, have been related to the fact that the Contigent had been prematurely demobilized due to the mounting opposition within its ranks to its repressive service conditions, most especially the off duty confinement of its troops in closed compounds.[108] Although there is no evidence that Sebele personally participated in any acts of resistance, he and other BaKwena freely expressed their sense of resentment upon their return.[109]

The British never did sanction the Kgosi's installation by the BaKwena. Neither have the BaKwena ever accepted the legitimacy of his deposition by the British. He was the only Protectorate Chief to be permanently removed from power on the grounds of his alleged misconduct; spending the last eight years of his life, 1931-39, in enforced exile at Ghanzi.[110] Prior to this detention without trial his rule generated much

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108. Grundlingh, pp. 86-114, including Lt.-Col. G.A. Godley, p. 106: "the camps occupied by our men and the prisoners-of-war are identical in every respect, except that as regards locality those occupied by prisoners are more favorably located." B.P. Willan "The South African Native Labour Contigent, 1916-18," *Journal of African History*, vol. 14, no. 1 (1978), pp. 61-86. Isang Papers- AC(S) to Linchwe, May 25, 1917 enclosing report on condition of B.P. troops by Lt. L.S. Glover, March 22, 1917 (same letter, sent to Sekgoma Khama, in Khama Papers.)

109. LMS A.G. Haile, March 14, 1918. Also BNA Microfilm "Letters from J.H.L. Burns to Mrs. A.F. Simpson and others, 1924-31" (orig. documents in Zimbabwe Archives BU 5/1/1/1.) and Clissold, p. 15. Several BaKwena subsequently refused to accept their service medals- BNA DCMol. 4/11, RMol. to GS, March 29, 1928.

110. Parallels do exist between Sebele's case and the circumstances surrounding the British intervention on behalf of Mathiba in 1906, thus removing Sekgoma Lesolthebe, as well as their handling of Seretse Khama in 1949-50. Sebele's peers Tshekedi Khama and Molifi were both suspended. Many other traditional leaders, not formally recognized by the colonial state, such as Gobuamang and John Nswazwi, were also removed from power by it.

opposition among some of his subjects as well as within the colonial administration. But his removal was deeply resented throughout the Kweneng, giving rise to a mass movement calling for his return. Why did Sebele become the center of so much discord? To this day BaKwena elders who recall his *bogosi* are divided in their opinions of the nature of his deeds and undoing.[111] There is a consenus, however, that much of the controversy that still surrounds his name stems from his desire to rule as a "traditionalist."

Sebele's traditionalism was an outgrowth of ideological trends that had been fostered in the last years of his father's reign. To Willoughby, the resurgent "heathendom" of the period had been the object of modest academic fascination as well as contempt:

> "Our booby of a chief has got pretty fast in the clutches of the witchdoctors, and there has been a wonderful attention to antique practices of late. This is the only town in the Protectorate, apparently, that has offered the black sheep on the ancestral graves this year- which is one of its great charms."[112]

The new ruler's own traditionalist inclinations were manifested early on through his championing of rainmaking, polygamy, and *bojale* as well as *bogwera*. Unlike his three predecessors his support for these practices was consistent and unambiguous, eventually leading him to sever all ties with

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111. Besides the interviews cited below this division is apparent in the Kweneng Historical Texts collected by P.P. Chakalisa, M.D. Lecha, M. Malabane, D.N.B. Senbye, and O.S. Selepeng in 1981, as well s T. Mbuya, 1984 (all located within the Botswana Collection, University of Botswana Library) for their respective fourth year history essays.

112. LMS Willoughby, Nov. 7, 1916.

the (Anglican) church.[113] Although some of his supporters, as well as opponents, saw him as a reactionary bent on restoring the pre-Christian order, the content as well as context of his actions suggest that he appealed to a new, that is "neo-traditionalist," social tendency in which revived elements of custom were synthesized with new inititives and endowed with new meanings. For example, despite his breaking ties with the church, he, worked with the Rev. Clissold, to establish Molepolole's first graveyards, and thereafter discouraged coutyard burial.[114] Yet under him *bogwera* and *bojale* were promoted as objective and symbolic assertions of autonomy from white domination as well as affirmations of customary identity. The regiments also served as important, leveling, agencies of solidarity in an age when labor migration was challenging other social bonds.

Another dynamic and controversial aspect of Sebele's traditionalism was the governing process within his Kgotla where, in the words of a later critic, O.J. Seboni: "He lost the chieftainship by following the bad advice of the majority."[115] At court he was noted for his generousity in sharing out meat and sorghum beer, which, beyond helping him attract a large and loyal following, promoted the egalitarian ideal of the

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113. Clissold, p. 14: "When I came first to Molepolole <1922> the church was known as the "Chief's Church", and I found that quite a number had joined it simply becuase the Chief had done so. When I was not prepared to sanction the Initiation School, and other measures introduced by the Chief, he was reported to have said that the Church now existed no longer since it did not obey him," Also LMS Burns, June 8, 1925.

114. M. Seboni, chapter 9, pargraph 2. Clissold, p. 34. Graveyard burial was made compulsory in 1937- DCMol 5/1.

115. BNA S 177/2, statement before the BaKwena Kgotla, Oct. 18, 1962.

forum as a place popular empowerment."[116] This assertion was reinforced by his practice, when absent, of entrusting daily charge of the Kgotla to Morwaeng Mhiko, the Difetlhamolelo head, and other advisors drawn from within Kgosing. In the process, a populist alliance between the Kgosi and an increasingly vocal section of commoners emerged to challenge the pretensions of the senior diKgosana of the Sons of Kgabo. The standing of many among this latter group was also compromised by their not having attended *bogwera*. Thus by 1921 one finds Motswakhumo Kgosidintsi complaining before the Native Advisory Council that:

> "The son of our Chief <ie. Sebele II ruling on behalf of his late father> respects the common people better than the elders. He is trying to replace them with common people- to drive them away. If the BaKwena meet, the common people alone agree with the Chief- not his relatives. This is a thing that makes me feel like a sick man....We have no position among the Bakwena. The wrong people rule!"[117]

In contrast one has the words, recorded in 1929, of one such "wrong person":

> "I greet His Honour the Resident Commissioner and the Magistrate. I am glad today because we dogs speak before His Honour. I am Sebele's dog. I stand up because of what Mocwakhumo said. He speaks of Sechele I. How did he live with Sechele I? He used to make fire for him. No Headman lived outside of the Kgotla then, they were the Councillors. We do not know these Councillors of today, they only think of their money and do not make fire for the

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116. Interviews w/ Litseababa Potungwane, Aug. 19, (who noted that to partake of the meat one simply had to bring one's knife); Koloi, Aug 23; O. Segakisa, Aug. 27; Mhiemang, Aug. 28; Mokgothisile Kgabo, Sept. 19; Majaasuma Matlhabani, Oct. 7; Ratlou Sebetlela, Oct. 8; Rre Molokwe, Dec. 17, 1985. Also BNA DCMol 2/22 ARMol. to Act.GS, Feb.(?)(possibly Dec.) 4, 1918. S 23/6/2 (also DCMol 4/12) RMol to RC, July 27, 1928.

117. BNA BNB 233 Minutes of Native Advisory Council, March 21-22, 1921.

> Chief. Mocwakhumo lives outside of the Kgotla, he comes from Lencweletau. We are ashamed of him and these Councillors for they do not come to the Kgotla.[118]

In addition to promoting initiation and respecting the humbler voices of the Kgotla, Sebele, in relative contrast to some of his peers as well as his grandfather, Sebele, and successor, Kgari Sechele, was popular for his conduct with regard to *matimela* and *masotla*.[119] In terms of *matimela* he is said to have extended the periods in which people could reclaim their cattle. According to Mhiemang he also sent out messengers to announce the arrival of the stray stock at the central kraal and even allowed individuals to retrieve their beasts after they had been moved to the designated cattlepost (where they were segregated from his personal herds.) Such scrupulousness must have been especially welcomed by absentee owners, that is those working across the border, and residents of the outlying communities who had to travel to Molepolole to reclaim their lost livestock.

At least some of the unclaimed cattle, along with those collected through fines and *bogwera* payments were slaughtered for the public. Unlike his successors Sebele is also credited with using the grain harvested from his modest *masotla* field at Gamasala for the care of the needy.[120] In this respect even

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118. BNA S 23/6/2 Testimony of "Chief's policeman" in Minutes of Meeting held in Chief's Kgotla at Molepolole, Nov. 18-19, 1929.

119. Interviews w/ Rre Mhiemang; Sampson Gower; and M.P. Pheto (seperately) Aug. 28; Kgosi Kobuane, Monte Mokgosi, Tshibidu Mosakwane, (together) Sept. 2; S.G. Masimega, Sept. 10; Rev. Molokwe, Dec. 17, 1985; Rabasimane Pheto, Jan. 18; Majaasuma Matlabani, Oct. 8, 1986; and Motlodong, May 7, 1987. Supported by information in BNA S 313/11; and S 421/5. Mhiemang and Majaasuma differ from others in claiming that Kgari's practice was the same as Sebele's.

120. Sebele's own claims about *masotla* and other rights are outlined in a 1927 I.L.O. questonaire, enclosed in BNA 47/3 "Forced Labour," RC to HC Aug. 4, 1927.

his critics remember him as having been a generous person who freely provided clothing and food to the destitute.[121]

Another aspect of Sebele's reign was his habit of riding on his horses about the town chastizing perceived wrongdoers, such as women who dressed "improperly," young men with too much time on their hands, and those who sang too late at night. Often he was accompanied in this policing by other, also mounted, members of his regiment. Many feared and/or resented these patrols as bullying which recalled the excesses of Motswasele II's "beaters" (*maotlana*.) Others praised the Kgosi as a strong ruler who upheld needed discipline. With its beer parties and other royally sanctioned entertainments, Molepolole during the 1920's was, in fact, a relatively easygoing place when compared with many of the Protectorate's other principal villages. But local law and custom incorporated restrictions not found in the sprawling townships of the Union. Some examples include the prohibition against a woman wearing a black dress when not in mourning or going to the stores without her husband, along with the general ban on travel by ox-cart on Sundays.[122]

The obvious gender and generational biases of aspects of Sebele's neo-traditionalism may be a manifestation a heightened desire on the part of male's to enforce their control over their wives and families in the context of the social strains that had accompanied Kweneng's transformation as a labor reserve. At any rate Sebele's outlook was certainly influenced by his own background as a migrant-laborer. In this

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121. Interviews w/ Koloi, Aug. 23; and Rev. Molokwe, Dec. 17, 1985; Victoria Namane, March 31; and S.G. Masimega, April 1, 1986. M. Seboni, chapter 5. Many BaKwena today also recall receiving candy from him when they were younsters.

122. LMS Haile, March 14, 1918, cites his ban on wives going to store as a sign of Sebele's "progressive" potential. BNA DCMol 4/16 "Sekwena law against trekking with wagon on Sunday."

respect his experiances as a young adult set him apart from his ruling peers as well as predecessors. Although he became relatively well educated, being in fact the first BaKwena Kgosi to be fully literate in English, he had disappointed many by dropping out of Tiger Kloof.[123] Thereafter he spent most of the period between 1912 and 1916 living in the laborer compounds and western townships of Johannesburg, eventually landing a relatively good job as a clerk at one of the mines. Besides gaining a firsthand insight into the lives of his future subjects, his self-imposed exile allowed him to exercise his passion for popular musical entertainment.[124] Thus, whereas several generations of BaNgwaketse rulers served as church organists, Sebele, upon his return, gained unique noteriety as a royal band leader who, on occasion, would publicly show off his talents as a pianist, guitar player, singer and ball room dancer.[125] To some Sebele's promotion of the new culture of ragtime and *marabi* was almost as disturbing as his championing of the old culture of initiation and rainmaking.

Sebele's *bogosi* was effected by his complex,

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123. Tiger Kloof student register at Moeng College, Otse, shows Sebele attended, w/ good grades, between Dec. 1911 and July 1912. He enrolled w/ number of his age mates who, along with his father, the Kgotla, and his friend K.T. Motsete are all said to have tried to convince him to stay- BNA S 23/6/2 Inquiry at Kgotla, Nov. 18-19, 1929, testimony of David Kgosidintsi. M. Seboni, chapter 2. Interviews w/ M.P. Pheto, Aug. 27, 1985 and Felix Kgosdintsi, April 1, 1986.

124. Interviews w/ S.G. Masimega, July 27; Sol & James Moruamang, Aug. 14; Koloi, Aug. 23; M.P. Pheto, Aug. 27, 1985; Susan Sechele (Mmamoruakgomo), March 31; and S.G. Masimega, April 1, 1986.

125. He also owned two phonographs and a considerable record collection, which he is known to have shared with the public.

contradictory personality.[126] He could be both intimidating and humble. Balanced against his benevolence was his inability, especially when incited by alcohole, to control his temper. His erratic moods led some to refer to him as "Kgomoyathlhaba" ("the wild bull".) To both of his wives and his various concubines he was something of a "Jeckle and Hyde" figure.[127] Of greater public concern was his capacity to get into fights, a vulgar trait not expected of one occupying his sublime position.[128] Like his, probably much less impetuous, great-grandfather he partially made up for his misbehaviour through his willingness to apologize and compensate the targets of his abuse. In the final analysis, he remains an ambiguous figure. Seen by some as a Kgosi of, as well as by, the people he, nonetheless, remained jealous of his perogatives. But ultimately it was his relations with various diKgosana, colonial officials, and some segments of the European population of Kweneng, rather than his personal shortcomings, which caused his downfall.

> "You are going too fast my friend, remember what I told you in the Kgotla the other day 'Lepotla potla le ya poli' <SeSotho> Drop this matter please. Remember that you are not yet confirmed in your chair of chieftainship by the Secretary of State, and don't make it difficult for me to tell the King

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126. On Sebele's character: interviews w/ Susan Sechele, June 9; S.G. Masimega, July 25; Letseababa, and July Janaury, Aug. 19; Koloi, Aug. 23; M.P. Pheto, Aug. 27; Mhiemang, Aug. 28; Sengwato Mokgadi, Sept. 9; Moipise Kemerile, Sept. 19; Majaasuma Motlhabani, Oct. 7-8; Rev. Molokwe, Dec. 17, 1985; Victoria Namane, March 31; S.G. Masimega (again), April 1; Bathoen (II) Gaseitsiwe, Oct. 7; A.M. Merriweather, Oct. 11, 1986; and Ratlou Ketsabile, April 14, 1987. Also M. Seboni and documents cited below.

127. Documentry material in BNA DCMol 2/20, 3/6, 4/9 (also S 23/4), DC Ghanzi 2/13, and S 225/8, 12, 14. Also M. Seboni, chapter 8.

128. See BNA S 601/19 "Meeting of the Bakwena Chief and Tribe...6th January, 1925" which specifcally addresses this issue.

> in due time tht you are a fit and proper person to be his Mokwena."- MacGregor to Sebele II, 1918.[129]

> "We were frightened because we never knew that there was anyone who could reply to the Government by a word that he refused."- Kebohula and Moiteelasilo to MacGregor, 1921.[130]

After his installation, the first major challenge faced by Sebele was how to accomodate the existence of the two Queen-mothers. During his father's reign, he had upheld his mother's position, which was the foundation of his own legitimacy. Once in power, he encourged Phetogo to leave Baruti's household and once more take up her place at Kgosing.[131] This still left Lena as a possible source of trouble: a potential which is confirmed in a private communication sent by her to the Resident Commissioner, in January of 1919, in which she claimed that Phetogo's divorce should have removed not only her but her children from any royal claims.[132] Implicit in the letter was an argument that her young son, the Kgosi's half-brother, MacIntyre (Mack Sechele) had a claim to *bogosi*. The need to neutralize the formidable Lena may have been a factor in Sebele's early decision to take her daughter, the Lovedale educated Tlhalefang Mphoeng, as his Mohumagadi-a-mogolo, in April 1918. If this was the case it was futile gesture for by the end of the year Lena had removed to the valley, where she began pressing her son's claims to certain properties in the possession of her son-in-law, on the basis that she had been

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129. BNA S 25/10 RC to Sebele II, June 13, 1918. Letter specificly in response to Sebele's then ongoing efforts to return George Mashwe to Molepolole.

130. DCMol 2/29 BTC to RC, Aug. 23, 1921, on Sebele's refusal to move to the Borkalalo. In similar vein, BNB 233, Chief Lotlamoreng to MacGregor at NAC, March 22, 1921: "I am frightened to hear Sebele disobeyed you!"

131. BNA DCMol. 5/5. LMS A.G. Haile, March 14, 1918.

132. BNA DCMol. 2/2 Lena to RC, Jan. 6, 1919.

his father's principal wife.[133] With former champions of his mother, notably Kebohula and Moiteelsilo but also including Khama, now showing support for his mother-in-law, Sebele demonstrated a sensible determination to resolve the dispute. Thus when Lena challenged the plausible award of the Kgotla by making what proved to be new claims he, uncharacteristicly, agreed to an arbitration procedure that placed final authority in the hands of the Resident Commissioner. A settlement was thus reached after which Lena's potential as an adversary declined.

By the time of Lena's flight hopes that the two community's of Molepolole, Ntsweng and Borakalalo, chould coexist in harmony were proving hopeless. At the start of his reign Sebele had attempted to diffuse tensions between the sub-villages by re-affirming the right of people to live and, in the context of the then existing churches, worship where they pleased.[134] He, with some three quarters of the community, settled at Ntsweng.[135] Those remaining at Borakalalo continued to include most, but not all, of the leading members of the four autonomous metse, who maintained their self-indentiy as the "true crocodiles." The death of Sechele had revived the ambition on the part of certain of the diKgosana in the valley to assert their own authority. They intially refused to recognize the new Kgosi's right to rule from the hill and lobbied to gain offical support for their stand by questioning

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133. BNA DCMol 2/2 and 2/21.

134. Sebele was hostile to attempts by the Roman Catholic and Seven Day Adventist Churches to come into his Reserve- LMS Dugmore, Sept. 26, 1922; LMS Papers Moedeng: Taylor to Haile, Oct. 20, 1930; and BNA S 179/3 ARC to RC, Nov. 13, 1930 - though he allowed the Dutch Reform Church to establish itself among local Afrikaners and "Coloureds." The British during the same period prevented the "African Evangelistic Band" from working among Kweneng's "Bushmen"- DCMol 6/3.

135. BNA S 23/5 RMol. to RC, Jan. 25, 1927; and S 172/15 Memo ARC, Nov. 9, 1930.

his ability to judge cases and otherwise govern without their resident advice.[136]

In July 1918 members of the Borkalalo party, led by the former Council members Moiteelasilo and Kebohula, attempted to block the removal of a house from the old central Kgotla.[137] In response Sebele deployed an armed party from Ntsweng to complete the task. The following year tensions between the Sebele and his Borakalalo based opponents boiled over during a dispute involving the cattle claims of a certain Gaebake who, having lost his case in his own junior kgotla, had appealed the decision to Kgosing.[138] Sebele, upon hearing the testimony of Gaebake's sister and others that he was lying, and observing his inability to identify any of the beasts in question, upheld the earlier decision and fined the plantiff for perjury. Moiteelasilo and Kebohula, neither of whom had attended the trial, then supported Gaebake before the Magistrate, who overturned the fine and ordered a new trial. This retrial collapsed when a faction fight broke out in the Kgotla after the Mokgalo speakers allegedly insulted the Kgosi.[139]

On May 17, 1920 MacGregor poured petrol upon the embers of BaKwena discord by requesting that Sebele return with his followers to Borakalalo "where the principal men of the tribe live."[140] The Resident Commissioner wanted to see his Chief and leading headmen living in close proximity to his magistrate's Camp. When the Kgosi refused he was threatened

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136. See for example BNA 25/10 Baruti to RC, Nov. 7, 1919.

137. BNA DCMol. 2/9 Annual Report-1919; and DCMol 2/22 Kebohula to RC, June 2, 1918.

138. BNA DCMol 2/22. Gaebake's claim involved cattal he had supposedly loaned out, *go mafisa* some 21 years earlier, i.e. prior to the rinderpest.

139. BNA 2/2 Sebele II to ARM, June 10, 1919.

140. BNA S 210/7 RC to HC, Aug. 6, 1921. DCMol 2/29 "Removal of Chief Sebele II and People from Hill to Borakalalo, 1920-21."

with deposition. Thus began another period of prolonged tension between the BaKwena and British authorities.

Faced with the ultimatum Sebele initially backed off by agreeing to the relocate. Despite this gesture he made no real effort to move. In September growing colonial impatience with this stalling led to a suspension in the payment of his Hut Tax commission at a time when he, like many of his subjects, was under pressure to pay off mounting debts.[141] In response he adopted a de facto policy of non-cooperation by avoiding meetings with the magistrate, Claude Ledeboer or "Ledibogo," and failing to assist him with either the 1921 census or tax collection.[142] As tensions escalated between the two, the Kgosi's excuses for staying away are said to have been replaced by outright assertions of SeKwena paramountcy. Majaasuma Motlhabani recalls Sebele telling Ledibogo that "he should leave if he was unwilling to work through him."[143] The Kgosi also boycotted the newly established Native Advisory Council (NAC), but his opponents attended seeking to use the "Resident Commssioner's kgotla" as a tool against him.[144]

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141. BNA DCMol 2/29 ARMol to GS, Sept. 14, 1920. Sebele's debt crisis, which in June 26, 1921 culminated in a writ, subsequently stayed, for his civil imprisonment is detailed in S 23/3, S 210/7, and DCMol 2/31 & 32. Also 2DCMol/10, Molepolole Civil Court, 1918-59, which records Sebele as the defendent in 19 cases prior to 1922. Between 1919-24, a period which coincided with local drought, new restrictions on cattle sales to the Union, and a sharp a downturn in mining employment, 536 cases involving civil charges against BaKwena were brought before the Molepolole magistrate. This credit crisis led to new regulations governing the the granting of credit to "Natives." Thereafter, until 1940, there were only 27 additional cases.

142. BNA DCMol 2/30 "Census;" and DCMol 2/9, Molepolole Annual Report 1921-22.

143. Interview w/ Majaasuma Motlhabani, Oct. 8, 1965. This dovetails w/ MacGregor's complaints about Sebele before the NAC (below) as well as other oral and documentary data on Sebele's relations with his magistrates in general.

144. Minutes of sessions: BNA BNB 232, Nov. 2, 1920; and BNB 233, March 21-22, 1921.

At the NAC's session of March 1921, MacGregor, while introducing an anti-Sebele petition sent to him few days earlier, expressed his own frustration: "I am not going to allow the Magistrate to wait upon the Chief."[145] The petition, which complained that Sebele did not listen to the advice of his royal uncles and called upon the administration to assure his shift to the valley, was, for its authors, well timed in that the meeting was marked by its near absence of diKgosi, who were expected to dominate its proceedings. Only the BaNgwaketse regent, Tshosa, and the Mafikeng based Tshidi-BaRolong Chief, Lotlamoreng, both notably weak rulers, were present. The BaKwena, with possibly one exception, were represented by the disloyal opposition, who hoped to persaude the Council to intervene on their behalf. While many members from the other *merafe* did not wish to discuss the petition, arguing that it had "not come in a proper way," others did, perhaps seeing an opportunity to increase their own status at the expense of the Protectorate's senior Kgosi. In the end MacGregor accepted the advice of the BaNgwaketse regent:

> (Tshosa): "I ask His Honour to elect his uncles to deal with tribal matters and the Magistrate."
>
> (MacGregor): "Wouldn't it be better for the Bakwena to do so?
>
> (Tshosa): "Yes I mean that they should be elected by the Bakwena and confirmed by you. They would act as your herd boys. I think matters would then mend. Because if he is taken from the chair there will be factions."

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145. BNA BNB 233 w/ letter (appendix "A"): Baruti & others to RC, March 19, 1921. Also DCMol 5/4, petition: Kebohula, Pitso Baruti, Baruti Kgosidintsi, Gaeshugelwa Kgosidintsi, Garebakwena Morueng, Motswakhumo Kgosidintsi, Lesele Bakwena, and Kekonele Tebele, Feb. 2, 1921.

The second BaKwena Tribal Council was formed a week later with Kebohula, Moiteelasilo and Gaashugelwa Kgosidintsi serving as salaried "regents."[146] Unfortunately we have no minutes of their "election" making it impossible to know just how popular the exercise was. All three were, conveniently enough, Borakalalo based foes of Sebele, clearly the sort of herdboys MacGregor wanted, although Gaashugelwa was to show so little interest in his new position, in contrast with his two collegues, that the magistrate came to mistaken conclusion that he had died. The Kgosi saw the new Council as a threat and, before the Resident Commissioner in May, publicly rejected it as well as the Commissioner's renewed demand that he relocate. But within days he once more appeared to reverse his stand, although some of his supporters remained defiant:

> (Motswasele Sechele): "I refuse to come down. I am the son of Sechele and Selemang, I am not a headman. I have no name in the BaKwena Headmen. My name is known by the Government. I am the son of Sechele. My name is written by God, he knows about it. You, do not put my name on the lists of BaKwena Headmen."[147]

Sebele's capitulation may have been merely another tactical retreat for it was accompanied by the emergence of a new ally, B.I. Vickerman or "Bikirman" (from Afrikaans

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146. BNA S 25/10 ARMol to GS (tel), March 31, 1921; and DCMol 2/29 ARMol to RC, April 7, 1921. In the letter it is suggested that the "sickly" Gaashugelwa be replaced by Motswakhumo, but this did not occure.

147. BNA DCMol 2/29 Motswasele Sechele to RC, May 23, 1921.

"Dikkerman," ie. "Biggerman.)"[148] With this development the Kgosi was able to outflank his opponents by having his case taken up by members of the new European Advisory Council (EAC.) In a series of interviews and letters Vickerman let it be known that he, with the support of at least two of his fellow Councillors, considered the forced relocation of Ntsweng's residents as "a case where European and Native matters are mutually involved." Based on this proposition he protested that he did not believe that the administration had the authority to mandate where a Chief and his people could live, that it was unwise for them to interfere in BaKwena politics by backing a "rebal faction," and that the move was against the interests of both the European and African residents of the hill, all of whom would be entitled to appropriate compensation. To drive home this last point he offered an estimated cost for the removal of £ 21 thousand, a reasonable, but for the impoverished Protectorate government of the time, nonetheless, daunting, figure.

Vickerman's intervention helped to turn the tables. After it was brought to his attention that his predecessor had only recently authorized the hill settlement, MacGregor informed Sebele that since he had now agreed to relocate his earlier

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148. Ratlou Ketshabile, interviewed Oct. 11, 1985, also states that Vickerman was preceded by Gower or "Bikiman" (from "Dikkeman," ie. "Bigman.") BNA DCMol 2/29 Vickerman to RC, June 3; ARMol to GS, June 21; to RM Gaberones, July 25, 1921. S 25/10 RC to Vickerman, June 7, 1921. See also S 13/3 "European Advisory Council." Isang papers, Isang to RC, July 23, 1921. Ledeboer specualated that Vickerman had been approached by secret envoys sent by Sebele to Mochudi (who are known to have sought the aid of Isang.) He also believed that Vickerman's intervention was motivated by his desire to protect the interests of another trader, J.C. Knoble, who had bought his store at Ntsweng. Contrary to the subsequent suspicions of some BaKwena, Isang was not fully supportive of Sebele's cause.

order to move was now modified to a request.[149] The Kgosi promptly responded that he was content to remain where he was.[150]

The sudden turn of events came as a severe blow to the two active members of the BTC and other opposition elements. They begged the Resident Commissioner to once more mandate the removal.[151] Their efforts was both pitiful, containing phrases like "we are afraid we notice that the Chief and people do not like us," and futile. For his part Sebele showed his determination to stay put by building, with communal labor, an impressive new BaKwena National Office next to his Kgotla. Unbeknownst to him his hand had by then been further strengthened through a memo by the High Commissioner in which it was stated that any attempt to depose him must enjoy the backing of a "substantial majority" of his subjects.[152] In his annual report for 1921 the Ledeboer noted that the BTC had become a "broken reed."[153]

With the defeat of attempts to force his evacuation from Ntsweng, the Kgosi felt secure enough to finally undergo *bogwera*.[154] In it had been the custom for one to pass through initiation before assuming *bogosi* but in Sebele's case this

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149. BNA DCMol 2/29 RC to Sebele II; also ARMol, July 21, 1921. S 23/3 RC to HC, Aug. 6, 1921.

150. BNA DCMol 2/29 Sebele II to RC, Aug. 19 & 26, 1921. Also S 25/10 and S 210/7.

151. BNA DCMol 2/29 BTC to RC, Aug. 19 & 23, 1921.

152. BNA S 23/3 HC to RC, Aug. 26, 1921. It was, however, agreed that the Secretary of State should continue to withold Sebele's confirmation as Chief.

153. BNA DCMol 2/9.

154. Dates when *bogwera* was held during Sebele's reign confirmed by Stigand in BNA S 210/7 ARC to RMol, March 26, in response to RMol to ARC, March 21, 1931; and LMS Molepolole Annual Reports 1922, 1924 (also general reports of LMS) and Burns, June 8, 1925. M. Seboni, chapter 6. Interviews w/ Sol & James Moruamang, Aug. 14; M.P. Pheto, Aug. 27; Peloentle Dihutso, Oct. 7; Majaasuma Matlhabani, Oct. 7, 1985.

had not been possible. Upon his father's ascession, the MaThubantwa regiment had been formed for him, but this had occured when his grandfather's ban of *bogwera* was still being observed.[155] Thereafter he had been away. Thus, in the austral fall-winter of 1922, he temporarily put aside his responsibilities in order to submit himself to the initiation process. After several months of confinement at Botlhapatlou, an absence that further strained his relations with Ledeboer, he re-emerged with the MaLatakgosi ("those who follow the Kgosi"), though in accordence with protocal he continued to be affiliated with the MaThubantwa.[156]

It was after his ordeal that Sebele became a true champion of *bogwera* and, unlike his father, *bojale*. The colonial authorities along with some opponents of the practice would later charge that in his zeal he enforced attendence. This is an unfair accusation. Although a few isolated examples of coercion on the part of proponents of initiation are known to have occured SeKwena law continued to uphold the right of free choice in the matter.[157] The real controversy was still over the question of who within a divided lineage was entitled to decide whether a particular boy or girl attended. In this

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155. The name "Mathubantwa" ("those who break up the battle") was in honour of the regiment of Sebele II's grandfather but thereafter became associated with praises honoring his own fight against the Kaiser.

156. In July Ledeboer was denied the authority to once more withold Sebele's Hut Tax commission- BNA S 25/3 ARMol to GS, July 6 & 21, 1922.

157. LMS 1922 Molepolole Annual Report, for example, reports just one case of alleged compulsion- a 19 year old orphan girl at Mmankgodi (ie. *mortswane* not under Sebele's direct control.) Enquries by the colonial government, as well as interviews by Dudley B.N. Senabye, in 1980 likewise only turned up one case of attempted kidnapping during the infamous 1931 *bogwera*- a teacher named Moyalemotho Brown Sekonopelo, who was assulted but escaped: BNA S 210/7 RM to RC, April, 1, 1931; and BNB 243, NAC Dec. 3, 1931. D.B.N. Senaby "Missionares, administrators, and the demise of the regimental system in Kweneng, 1885-1945" (Univ. of Botswana Fourth Year History Essay, 1981.)

context Sebele's younger brother Mosarwa, who was to be the leader of MaLatakgosi, may have gone to Kimberly to escape the pressure of his senior sibling.[158] But evidence indicates that his younger brother Kgari willingly accepted the leadership of the MaYakathata in 1924 despite the, disputed, tradition that the regimental name signified "those who went under compulsion."[159]

After 1922 the Anglican as well as L.M.S. missions were opposed to initiation and encouraged their congregations to take punitive measures against the parents of initiates. The LMS also sponsored the local formation of the Protectorate's first Boy's and Girl's Life Brigade Companies, a Christian youth movement patterned after the scouts, to provide a moral

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158. According to M. Seboni, chapter 6, paragraph 7. Other evidence shows that he left Kweneng for several years in 1921.

159. The story of Kgari being forced seems to be rationalization of subsequent events. (Interviews w/) S.G. Masimega, July 25; Sol & James Moruamang, Aug. 14; Letseababa, Aug. 19; Majaasuma Matlhabani, Oct. 7, 1985; and Motlodong, May 7, 1987 suggest that Kgari was probably encouraged to attend by his mentor Moiteelasilo (although Sebele as his eldest brother could claim authority in the matter.) In 1931 Kgari, himself, made it clear that he was not personally opposed to *bogwera*- BNA BNB 243, NAC, Dec. 3, 1931. Motlodong, furthermore, plausibly asserts that the "thata" refers to many, thus the regiment was in fact "those who went in large numbers" (the *Report of the London Missionary Society*, for year ending March 31, 1925, p. 88 "Molepolole," states "No fewer than 200 boys attended the initiation ceromonies.") NB. "thata" can denote "difficulty" as well as "forced" and "many."

alternative to the "revival of heathenism."[160] Another policy of the missionaries was to prevent *bogwera* and *bojale* graduates from attending their schools. In 1923 Sebele took control of the school board by unilaterally appointing to it three of his subjects, Goktweng Gaealafshwe, David Kgosidintsi, and Martinus Seboni.[161] By so doing he gave the body, which had been under the de facto control of the local magistrate and two mission representatives since 1910, a membership that was two thirds BaKwena. The authorities in Mafikeng eventually allowed this reform to stand despite the objections of Ledeboer. Thereafter the two mission soceties continued to cooperate with the Kgosi's representives in the running of the schools, but not without misgivings:

> "The whole influence of the male teacher in the schools is against the teaching of Christ, and young men of education are following in the steps of their dissolute Chief and at present there seems no way of making the alternative needed, in order to win back the schools to the influence and control of the right people....Our Christian children are being taught by anti-Christian and morally corrupt teachers."[162]

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160. LMS Papers at Moedeng: Burns to Haile, Nov. 21, 1924; and Report by Violet Taylor on Women's Work, 1929. BNA DCMol. 3/2. S 361/1/1 (on Pathfinders and Wayfarers). Bamangwto Tribal Adminstration 19/3 "Youth Movements." The Boy's Brigades collapsed after Burn's left Molepolole at the end of 1928. In 1932 both movements were superceded by the secular Pathfinders and Wayfarers movements at the behest of the Colonial Government. *Report of the London Missionary Society*, for year ending March 31, 1923, p. 81: "At Kanye as at Molepolole there has been a revival of heathenism. The forward movement chronicled in the 1921 report was met by 'a counter move in 1922 from the Powers of Darkness.'"

161. BNA S 598 "Bakwena School Committee- increase of Native members." Also DCMol 3/17 & 18 on subsequent functioning.

162. LMS Papers at Moedeng: Lewis in 1929 Annual Report, Molepolole.

In the months that followed, Sebele and Ledeboer continued to oppose one another. Unfortunately many of the details of their mutual struggle have been lost. What is known is that by the end of March the Kgosi was already calling for the magistrate's removal and, in July, he further complained about Ledeboer's interfearence in his domestic affairs.[163] During the same period the magistrate accused the Kgosi and his secretary of embezelling £ 200 in Hut Tax receipts; a charge that was subsequently dropped.[164] These events coincided with the holding of at least one public enquiry at Metsemotlhaba under the auspices of Rowland Daniel, the Assistant Resident Commiissioner, after which it was decided that Ledeboer should be replaced in accordance with Sebele's wishs.[165] Prior to this the magistrate is also known to have objected to the role played in local affairs by Raphalane Hirschfeldt, giving some credence to his sucessor, A.G. Stigand's, undoubtedly exaggerated allegation that the trader played an instrumental role in the affair: "it seems pretty clear to me that the Bakwena who spoke against Mr. Ledeboer at the meeting at Metsimotlaba, most of them (who were many of them merely the riff-raff followers of Sebele) were paid for their condemnatory speeches by M.L. Hirschfeldt, who only paid them after they had spoken and according to what they uttered!"[166]

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163. BNA S 4/1, RC to HC, March 24, 1923. DCMol 4/12 Sebele II to RC, July 7, 1923.

164. BNA S 210/7 "Indictment." S 25/3 minute dated Oct. 9, 1923 on Sebele's accounts. (Other DCMol files which aparently detailed the Hut Tax sitution at the time were preserved and sent to Zimbabwe in 1958 but have since disappeared making it impossible to know the full circumstnces of the case.)

165. BNA S 4/1. S 366/6/1 Act.RC to HC, Dec. 5, 1923; and HC Notice 120 of 1923, Dec. 3, 1923. Ledeboer left Molepolole in the first week of September. The outcome of Ledeboer's "row" with Sebele is criticised in passing by C.F. Rey in his diary, entry during March 1930 (not publiished in Crowder & Parsons.)

166. BNA S 23/4 RMol to GS, June 25, 1926. DC Mol 2/31 ARMol to GS, Sept. 10, and GS to RC, Sept. 20, 1921. Also in January

Part 3: The Marabi Dance

> "As a host Sebele is charming. He will play last year's jazz melodies on a piano to amuse you, and, if it is a special occasion, his chief wife will wear an evening frock which was also bought in Cape Town some years ago. And the white serfs of Molepolole will serve you with Kaffir beer that is brewed for such distinguished visitors."- W.J. Makin, 1929[167]

> "I have read your letter to the Councillors, and we came to the conclusion that the day you are going to take this case, say two days previous, please let me know, I shall come to the case to hear the proceeding, and I will come with them and the Bakwena; to come and get your information as to why the Bakwena law be taken as nothing, whereas it has been all the time kept and carried, not only in our Reserve, but at Gamangwato and Kanye Reserves, they have it, and it applies to all, European and Non-European."- Sebele II to Molepolole magistrate, Stigand, 1926.[168]

As Sebele consolidated his authority he was able to encourge a modest degree of of local development. In addition to his mounted patrolling, he also emulated Isang by insisting that SeKwena homes conform to certain building standards, such as the use of "Cape thatching" and the proper fencing of yards, and that the streets around them be kept clean and well maintained.[169] Rubbish pits were dug in place of the unsanitary garbage heaps, which had long been an infamous part of the Molepolole environment. Improved roads and drifts

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of 1921 Ledeboer had prosecuted Hirschfeldt for game law violtions- 2DCMol/10.

167. W.J. Makin *Across the Kalahari Desert*, (Arrowsmith, London 1929), p. 23.

168. BNA DCMol 4/16 Sebele II to RMol, April 7, 1926.

169. M. Seboni, chapter 6, paragraph 1. Sebele, like many of his contemporaries, is said to have deeply respected but never fully trusted Isang: Interview w/ Susan Sechele, March 31, 1986. Also Isang Papers: Lotlamoreng to Isang, March 27, 1923 (on Sebele complaining of Isang going behind his back.)

were also constructed to accomodate the arrival of motor cars and lorrys.[170] In addition to the National Office, a new central school was also built although seven open air "country schools" serving outlying areas were closed.[171] In the crucial area of water, a number of public boreholes were sunk but the BaKwena failed to complete their Kgosi's most ambitious public work, a dam, partially as a result of an inability to mobilize adequate communal labor for the project.[172]

In addition to his parocial initiatives Sebele began attending the NAC where, based on his pedigree, he enjoyed the honor of being the lead speaker (following the Resident Commissioner's address.)[173] His usual pattern on such occasions was to present the Council's latest consensus of proposals and jeremiads and then defer to Isang and others to carry the debate. Many of the NAC sessions focused on the underdeveloped nature of the local economy, reflecting the

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170. BNA DCMol 4/20. M.Seboni, chapter 6, paragraph 6. Some of the old drifts, w/ dates of construction, are still around. At the time Sebele was probably the only MoTswana in Kweneng to own a car but the, gradual, replacement of wagons lorry's in carrying both goods and migrant laborers had a broader impact.

171. DCMol 3/17 "BaKwena School Committee, 1924-25"; and 2/9 Annual Reports 1919-29, in the 1929 report the BaKwena schools were critcised for their "undue stress placed on teaching of English." BNA 1922 BNB 234 NAC minutes, Nov. 15, 1921. Also *Report of the London Missionary Society*, 1922, p. 77.

172. BNA DCMol 4/19. Also NAC minutes: BNB 238, March 22-23, 1926; 239, March 17, 1927; 240, April 26-27, 1928; 241, April 15, 1930. S 172/15 RMol to ARC Oct. 20, 1930. The BaKwena received grant of L 500 from the Tribal Fund for the project which, beyond the question of labor, was ill conceived.

173. BNA S 14/3 "Native Advisory Council" as well as NAC minutes.

Southern Protectorate's status as a labor reserve.[174] Sebele joined others in voicing opposition to the regulatory pattern imposed by the South African as well as Protectorate Governments, which restricted Africans to migrant labor while keeping local commerce, increasingly the one way retail of imported food and consumer goods, in the hands of a relative handfull of entrepenures of European and, to a lesser extent at the time, Asian origen. Specifically attacked were such things as the licencing system, the use of "goodfors," and the Union weight restrictions on local cattle all grievences that the B.P. administrtion was unwilling and/or incapable of alleviating. But Kgosi's success was limited to the relatively minor accomplishment of getting the British to relax the permit system governing the sale of ammunition to BaTswana.

Unable to make much headway in the NAC, Sebele undertook a number of modest local measures. The sale of cattle and grain were regulated and he is said to have intervened in cases where traders were suspected of cheating or accused of offering inferior goods.[175] Like a number of his peers he also used the threat of boycott against offending storekeepers. But his *bogosi* achieved its greatest international noteriety by successfully imposing a series of price controls on Kweneng's

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174. See previous chapter. The demands put forward by the diKgosi during the 1920's are quite similar to those subsequently outlined by L.L. Leepile, "Hand Off Bechuanaland," Sept. 23; and "Bechuanaland," Oct. 7, 1933, *Usebenzi/South African Worker* (newspaper of the Communist Party- South Africa), in his analysis of the B.P.'s role as a "reservoir of cheap labour." See also BNA S 156/11 on government confiscation of copies of *Usenbenzi*.

175. Interviews w/ M.P. Pheto, Aug. 27; Samson Gower, Aug. 28; Mhiemang, Aug. 28; Moipise Kemerile, Sept. 19; Ratlou Ketsabile, Oct. 8; Kebotse Rasiila, Nov. 1, 1985; and S.G. Masimega, Jan. 13, 1986. Also scattered references in M. Seboni.

resident population of European and Eurafrican blacksmiths.[176] At the same time that members of the EAC were defending the Kgosi's right to rule from where he pleased they were also protesting against his using his control over wood cutting in order to impose fee guidlines on the artisans. In response to the EAC concern the British intervened to modify the prices upward, but in 1924 the BaKwena succeeded in pushing them back down again. As word of this state of affairs reached the South African press it became sensationalized in an article headlined "White Serfs of a Negro Chief."[177] Thereafter, the story has periodicly resurfaced in books as well as periodicals. By 1928 it had reached Britain as the "Black Chief's White Slaves."[178]

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176. BNA S 261/1/1 RMol to ARC, March 10, 1930. S 352/9, 15, 17: "Undesirable Europeans in Native Reserves." DCMol. 4/16. DCMol 5/20/3. DCMol 2/27 "European School, 1918-24." Interviews w/ M.P. Pheto Aug. 27, 1985; S.G. Masimega, April 1, 1986; and Ratlou Ketsabile, April 14, 1987. The smiths, whether brown or white, were identified as Boers/MaBuru with the exception of one figure, remembered as "Seakgatlhogo" for the way he moved his head while walking, who was a black American from Alaska. He is said to been a popular figure and close friend of Sebele's. There was seperte "Coloured" communty at Mogopetsane.

177. LMS Burns, March 9, 1925: the apparent origen of the story was a Johannesburg reporter who passed through Molepolole with the Union Locust Expedition (BNA S 34/4.) The September and December 1924 issues of the journal *Zuid-Afrika* carried a discussion of the "Blanke Hollandsche slaven bij een Bechuanenhoofdman," which concluded that they were actually coloured.

178. W.J Makin "Black Chief's White Slaves," clipping from *The Overseas Daily Mail*, July 14, 1928, in BNA S 43/7 "Slave Trade, Slavery and similar conditions." Reprinted from *Daily Mail*, July 11, 1928. A fuller and more fanciful account of the "White Slaves of Molepolole" can be found in Makin's *Across the Kalahari Desert*, pp. 22-25. Inspired by Makin's observation that "Molepolole is a native kraal ruled over by a black chief buried some miles in the desert." *Punch*, July 18, 1928, p. 79, ("Who Stole the Lion's Dinner"), added: "Though our buried chief is black// We decline to wander back// To the company of whites// And their civilized delights,// Having utterly lost touch// With the British and the Dutch// But continuing to be wholly// Satisfied with Molepolole."

Although Sebele, following the transfer of Ledsboer, was able to rule for a number of years in relative peace, the tensions existing between him and his Borakalalo based opponents on one hand and the British on the other did not disappear. The former were resentful of their loss of influence while the latter, despite improved cooperation in the all important area of tax collection, still found him troublesome Chief, in large part due his his stubborn conviction that the officials who came to his country should help him rule rather than the other way around.[179] It is said that he was in the habit of taking imperial directives as mere advice and was often "arrogant" with officials.

In contrast to his sometime ally Tshekedi, a teetotaling workaholic who was disciplined (and humorless) to a fault, Sebele's parallel defense of his own administrative autonomy was compromised by irresponsible behavior.[180] He remained the gregarious, but at times abusive, *marabi* King who when failing to answer an official summons would often be with his guitar drinking beer or, perhaps, illicit brandy at one of his subject's kgotlas. This livestyle created opportunities for his internal opposition who, with the active encouragement of Ledeboer's successor, A.G. Stigand or "Sekoanyana" ("small English."), re-emerged as a factor during the second half of his reign.

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179. BNA S 8/8/2 RMol to GS, April 30, 1926 (for example.)

180. Here I, in particular, take seriously the criticisms of Sebele offered by his peer Bathoen (II) Gaseitsiwe (also teetotaler), interviewed Oct. 7, 1986. On the other hand July January, Aug. 19, 1985, stressed to me that Sebele's behavior was much less exteme than that of his other contemporary Kgosi Molefi (who in turn was mild when compared with Sebele's friend Mosokwane Pule, the subordinate Kgosi of the BaLete at Gabane, who probably helped Sebele get his brandy.)

An early sign of a renewed challenge on the part of the Borakalalo diKgosana occured in January of 1925.[181] A controversial aspect of the Kgosi's court judgements was his general reluctance to award fines to parents of impregnated daughters in cases involving seduction.[182] One such case, brought before him by the "Coloured" ward of Mogopetsane, led to a serious outbreak of dissension in the Kgotla between Sebele and his old adversaries Kebohula and Moiteelasilo.[183] Stigand used this incident to call a public meeting in which the "elder headmen" were invited to discuss the Chief's conduct. Although the Kgosi, along with his two uncles, was the subject of some criticism the magistrate's hope that the forum would give rise to a BaKwena "Magna Charta" proved illusory. Despite this open challenge to his authority Sebele felt his position secure enough later in the year to agree to Kebohula's appointment s acting-Chief, while he spent two months in Lesotho and Johnnesburg.[184]

The era of relative stability for Sebele came to an end after he battered his mistress Kekokilwe on or just before Christmas day of 1925. Several days after the incident Kebohula brought Kekokilwe before Stigand who promptly claimed criminal jurisdiction over the case. The Kgosi never denied his culpability but maintained that he should be judged by his own Kgotla; an argument that the magistrate rejected.

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181. BNA S 601/19.

182. The position in the regard was indentical to that of Ntebogang the (female) Regent of the BaNgwketse from 1924-28. Schapera *Tribal Innovators*, pp. 174-75.

183. This was a socalled "Baster" community who had migrated to Molepolole from Gordonia during the reign of Sebele I. They were officially classified as "natives" during the colonial period. BNA S 467/5 RC Report of tour May 31 to June 19, 1936. DCMol 5/15 "Mogopetsne Coloured School." Interview w/ July January, Aug. 19, 1985. B. Keddy "The 'Coloured' community in Molepolole" (Univ. of Botswana Fourth Year History Essay, 1986.)

184. BNA S 601/14; and DCMol 2/9 Annual Report for 1925.

In the end, he was never tried for the assualt, which quickly became overshadowed by the rush of intrigue.

Sebele's sudden legal difficulty was the moment that his local enemies, led by Kebohula and Moteelasilo, had been waiting for. Secret meetings were held at Borkalalo and a petitiion was drawn up calling for Sebele's overthrow. The petitioners cause was seemingly strengthened when Wababararo Motsatsi and old Motswasele Sechele, both prominent Ntsweng residents, signed up. There were also rumors of regicide. For his part Sebele turned for support to Isang:

> "I am letting you know I shall have a talk with the BaKwena. I was quareling with my wife and this quarel has now been taken up by the magistrate and aroused the sleeping dogs from their slumber. BaKwena who were afraid to speak shall now speak and the old wounds will reopen. I am calling on you to be present and hear with your own ears. Do not send the ears of some one else, you must come even if you are busey and hear how I am judged."[185]

A few days later, on the eve of his court date, Sebele, fearing for his safety, took temporary refuge with Isang at Mochudi.[186] This flight was accompanied by Stigand's forwarding of the petition to Mafikeng accompanied by his own recommendtion that Sebele be replaced by Kebohula on provisional basis pending some sort of plebiscite. Jules Ellenberger, now the Resident Commissioner, was sympathetic. He asked the High Commissioner for authorization to topple the Chief and bar him from returning to Kweneng. In reply the High Commissioner pointed out that only the Colonial Secretry could approve such action. He also reiterated the injunction

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185. Isang Papers: Sebele II to Isang, Jan. 8, 1926.

186. BNA S 23/4: RM Gaberones to RC, Jan. 15; RMol to RC, Jan. 15; RC to HC, Jan. 17; HC to RC, Jan. 19; RC to HC, RMol, & RM Gaberones, Jan. 21; RM Gaberones to RC, Jan. 22; RC to RM Gaberones, Jan. 23; and Isang to RM Gaberones, Jan. 23, 1926. This incident was recalled by almost all the individuals I interviewed about Sebele's reign.

that any deposition should reflect the will of the majority and not give rise to serious disturbence. Ellenberger then decided to hold a public inquiry hoping that the BaKwena would support their Kgosi's removal.

The enquiry, which lasted two days, turned into a debacle for the petitioners.[187] By the day of the inquiry Sebele, having returned with Isang at his side, had reconciled with Kekokilwe and Wabararo, both of whom gave him valuable support at the meeting. The defection of the latter helped to expose the Borakalalo faction as once more an isolated minority. Kekokilwe also charged that there had in fact been an attempt to assassainate the Kgosi: "They serched every house where the Chief was sleeping and if they found him they were to put fire, hold the door and say lightening killed him." Curiously the Resident Commissioner took no interest in this allegation, which appears to have been genuine.[188] When Sebele called for a vote only sixteen individuals, eight less than had signed the petition, were in favor of his abdication. Ellenberger would subsequently write: "We missed our chance by not removing him from the reserve."[189]

The humiliation of the petitioners did not end the struggle. Having at least temporarily secured his own position Sebele hoped to repeat his earlier triumph over Ledeboer by ridding himself of the presence of Stigand. His opportunity emerged soon after the inquiry when the magistrate mistakenly

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187. BNA S 23/4 contains minutes of the inquiry, Jan. 25-26, 1926, including pro-Sebele counter petition, Jan. 26, 1926, w/ 32 names.

188. Interviews w/Sampson Gower, Aug. 28, 1985. Also Mbuya, Historical Texts: K. Sebele, Taru Moleta, S. Gower, and A. Bathahedi. NB. This alleged plot occured just three months before Simon and Obeditse Ratshosa's attempt to murder Tshekedi.

189. BNA S 23/4 RC to IS, Feb. 19, 1926.

shot and wounded a local lunatic.[190] Four months later, on June 15, 1926, the Kgosi wrote directly to the Resident Commissioner asking for a response to his earlier communiction on the case, which he claimed had been forwarded via the magistrate's office. Although Sebele produced a supposed copy of the letter, dated February 15, 1926, Stigand denied ever receiving it. Initially, the magistrate charged that both letters were forgerys perpetrated by the Chiefs "alien" secretary, Kingsly Motsumi, but Sebele made it clear that he stood behind their authenticity.[191] He also issued a call for Stigand's removal citing his harassment of his subjects through such arbitrary acts as making them remove cowbells at night on the grounds that it disturbed his sleep, and his incitement of plots against *bogosi*, as well as the shooting incident.

In the months that followed, Stigand betrayed a sense of fear, if not paranoia, in a torrent of increasingly colorful prose, which he forwarded to his superiors.[192] In these letters he ominously warned his collegues that "We are faced with an alternative government," which he repeatedly referred to as the "Hidden Hand." Who was behind "the dangerous power that we have here controlling the Chief and a good proportion of the tribe"? Wrote the magistrate "I have reasone to believe that the alien Kurland Jew storekeeper Max L. Hirschfeldt is at the bottom of it in collaboration with the Greek Jew Joseph Zakar, recently licensed as a Labour agent for Hadleys." This "cabal" was further alleged to have recruited Motsumi and

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190. BNA 23/4 "Gobe" including Sebele II to RC, June 15; and July 13; RMol. to GS, June 19; and 26, 1926.

191. Sebele had recruited Motsumi, who had earlier served as a teacher at Mosopa, in Johnnesburg- S 23/3.

192. Correspondence in S 23/4 (see also DCMol 4/12), RMol to GS, June-Aug. including letters dated June 25 & 26, 1926 (cited.)

other BaKwena "hangers on." The magistrates great anxiety was that he, himself, would be the subject of public inquiry:

> "Sebele and his stage managers, Mochumi cum M.L. Hirschfeldt and Zakar, when asking for the meeting of the tribe before Col. Daniel hope to bluff him by engineering a meeting at which the 'claque' of riff-raff, intimadated and bribed by Zakar's money (to be paid by results) to simulate agreement with Chief Sebele's utterances. Their only hope- this being they think their only chance now that the much dreaded Ellenberger is away- is to try get him to make a discision by counting of the heads at such a meeting, that is by quanity instead of quality, and render the opinion of all trustworthy and reasonable headmen null and void."[193]

In place of such an inquiry the magistrate proposed a meeting limited to the "leading headman." To help determine who would be entitled to participate in such an encounter Stigand had Kebohula and Moiteelasilo draw up a list of twenty-eight names.[194] It was further proposed that, before this august body, either Ellenberger or Daniel should pubicly back Stigand over the shooting, order Motsumi's removal from the Reserve, and reffirm Kebohula and Moiteelasilo's long dormant status as regents.[195] Stigand also hoped to at least threaten Zakar and M. Hirschfeldt with revocation of their liscences. In light of this last suggestion it is interesting to note that in his Hidden Hand writings Stigand frequently supported his allegations with intelligence allegedly supplied by "the two honest traders," J.C. Knoble and Adolph Hirschfeldt, both of whom happened to be in competition with Zakar and M. Hirschfeldt but not each other.

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193. BNA S 23/4 RMol to GS, July 27, 1926.

194. Stigands copy in BNA DCMol 4/22. It also appears in a number of other BNA files indicating that it must have continued to be used as a reference for a number of years.

195. BNA S 23/4 RMol to GS, Aug. 12, 1926.

Given their desperate tone it is undoubtedly wise to approach Stigand's Hidden Hand correspondence with a fair amount of scepticism. He does, nonetheless, raise a number of allegations of which two are noteworthy. His most serious charge is that Sebele was bribed by Zakar to supply two hundred youths as farm laborers in return for a motor car. This allegation is supported by a signed statements from two individuals who claimed Zakar's brother mentioned the deal.[196] In the end Zakar tried, but failed, to recruit farm workers but did sell Sebele a Ford in return for some cattle. The possibility that the two had been foiled in a nefarious scheme can neither be confirmed nor dismissed .

The other allegation was that Zakar was also behind Sebele's efforts to have Knoble's labor license revoked.[197] Although this accusation cannot be dismissed it is least countered by the fact that Knoble's conflict with Sebele predated Zakar's arrival. It is at least as likely that Knoble manipulated Stigand's opposition to Zakar, who soon folded, in order to preserve his position as the only resident labor recruiter.

To the Sebele's dissappointment his complaints about Stigand were never seriously considered. Eventually a response was sent that supported the magistrate and pointedly reminded the Chief that his appointment had never been confirmed by London.[198] With this vindication Stigand tried to promote the status of Kebohula and Moiteelasilo by mandating that all of

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196. BNA S 23/4 Statements by Spencer & Boyles, July 21, 1926.

197. BNA S 601/14 ARMol to RC, Oct. 10, 1925. S 23/4 RMol to GS, Aug. 10, 1926; and RC to RMol Dec. 21, 1926.

198. BNA S 23/4 HC to Sebele II, Sept. 27, 1926. This response had been delayed because Stigand had informed his superiors that Sebele had lost interest in the matter; he had not- ARC to HC, Aug. 30, 1926.

the Chiefs official correspondence should be co-signed by the two.[199] He had adopted this policy despite his own admission that the former figure had a reputation for dishonesty and was looked upon as an anathema by at least two thirds of his *morafe*. Stigand's attempt to revive the BTC collapsed after Kebohula was unanimously convicted by the Kgotla of practicing *boloi*, "witchcraft," against the Kgosi.[200] In order to negate the judgement that Kebohula be exiled the B.P. government enacted the Witchcraft Act of 1927, which has since remained on the books.

While his opponents were in temporary disarray the authorities were becoming concerned about the close relationship being forged between Sebele and the other diKgosi. The key figure in this emerging alliance was Tshekedi who upon assuming office in 1926 abandoned the aloof stance that had long characterized his father, Khama's, relations with the other diKgosi of the Protectorate.[201] In a major initiative Tshekedi, in July 1927, hosted a summit between himself, Sebele, and Ntebogang (BaNgwaketse) in order to discuss the recent declaration by the High Commissioner, the Earl of Athlone, against the enslavement of BaSarwa and other administrative actions which jeopardized the status of their

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199. BNA S 23/4 RMol to GS, July 27; and Aug. 16, 1926. Also DCMol 5/17.

200. BNA S 23/5 "Charges against Kebohula and Moiteelasilo." As was customary Sebele absented himself from the Kgotla which included many of his critics.

201. BNA S 1/11 RC to HC, March 16, 1920 (noting Khama's reluctance to join the other diKgosi in public): "Khama is not particularly friendly with the other Chiefs and moreover Sebele, the young Chief of the BaKwena, is Khama's genealogical superior and though inferior in every other respect, would expect first place."

bogosi.[202] At the MoNgwato's insistence these meetings were held *in camera* with only the rulers and their private secretaries present so as to assure that the British did not get wind of their doings before the talks were concluded.[203] The three rulers agreed on a joint declaration to the High Commissioner in which they requested an audience to discuss their grievences with regard to the imposition of increased colonial control over Witchcraft, Tribal Labor, Heritary Servants, as well as the banning of Hut Tax collection in the European farm areas of the Protectorate.[204]

With Tshekedi as their major spokeman the diKgosi followed up their petition with a forceful presentation before Athlone in November of 1927.[205] Although they failed to win any major concessions, the renewed unity among the "Sons of Malope" created the core of a new national alliance among the royals based on their common interest in resisting further colonial inroads into the residual autonomy of their *merafe* and the continuing threat of incorporation into South Africa and/or Southern Rhodesia.[206] Through his statesmanship the BaNgwato ruler also ended decades of mutual suspicion between the Khama and Sechele dynasties. For his part Sebele, to the

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202. BNA S 6/1 contains a secrete intelligence report to the RC on the meeting by anonymous (Moanaphuti Segolodi?) opponent(s) of Tshekedi, July 1927. Also interview w/Koloi, Aug. 23, 1985. It is notable that Isang was excluded from the talks, while his nephew Molefi, upon his assumption of *bogosi* in 1930, was welcomed by Tshekedi and Sebele.

203. Sebele is reported to have initially objected to Tshekedi's method arguing that "the uncles and brothers" should be included.

204. BNA S 6/1 (and DCMol 5/10) Tshekedi, Sebele II, & Ntebogang to HC, July 20, 1927.

205. BNA S 6/1, (also DCMol 5/10, LMS Burns papers) Minutes of the meeting, Nov. 21-22, 1927.

206. For imperial monitering cooperation between diKgosi: BNA S 89/5-8. Ntebogang's role in the affair led the B.P. administration to encourage her early stepping down as regent- BNA S 6/1 (internal factors- S 5/5.)

growing anxiety of the British, actively embraced the new alliance, as is indicated in following excerpt from a letter by Bathoen II (who replaced Ntebogang) to Tshekedi in 1930.

> "I agree that we must meet to decide over these laws. We must prepare strong criticisms of what the government will come out with. You and I can meet at a discrete place quickly to discuss the issues, but I do not know about the other diKgosi, that is the Mochudi and Gamalete rulers. The three of us can meet....I will go to Molepolole on the 5th and 6th of November to consult with the Mokwena about these words and tell him about our meeting....nowadays Sebele and I are the only ones who hear from one another, the rest of the diKgosi do not visit."[207]

In 1928 and 1929 Ellenberger's successor, Daniel, tried twice to impose another BTC on the BaKwena. In both instances he used new Borakalalo petitions against Sebele as his excuse, and in each case the outcome was the same. Only a small group supported the Council, whereas Sebele and a large majority of the commoners opposed it. Daniel's failures were local triumphs for Sebele's supporters, but they ultimtely convinced the British that stronger measure against Sebele would be necessary.

On May 8, 1928 a small group of self-proclaimed headman once again filed a petition against Sebele, calling for his political and, perhaps more importantly, financial powers to be transferred to a new BTC of four members, to be appointed from among themselves.[208] Other than their own persistent ambition, and the equally persistent backing that they received from the British, it is unclear what motivated this

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207. BNA Bamangwato TA 20/2 Bathoen to Tshekedi, Nov. 4, 1930. A few months later the Resident Commissioner, C.F. Rey, would note: "Sebele and Tshekedi appear to be great friends now! an unholy alliance!- S 89/7 RC to IS, March 5, 1931.

208. BNA S 23/6/1 (also DCMol 5/20) The petition contained 19 names.

sudden resurgence of the Kgosi's opponents. One possible racial influence was Sebele's marriage to Susan Wolfe, a Eurafrican, who became his second wife in accordence with SeTswana law.[209] Said David Kgosidintsi many years later:

> "I only heard that Sebele wanted to marry Susu and her being a coloured the Bakwena were annoyed and felt their Chief was not acting according to native law and custom. They then told the Government. That was one of the things that annoyed the Bakwena beyond limit. I was annoyed. It was his desire to marry her, they were already living together and this is one of the things that caused the banishment."[210]

In order to act on this request, Daniel held an inquiry six weeks later at Molepolole.[211] He summed up the results as follows:

> "During the course of the meeting it became evident that the petitioners were in the minority. They consisted of headmen related to the Chief's family, but they were only supported by a handful of the common men of the tribe. Whereas the opponents to the petition were represented by the Chief, a few headmen and about 3/4 of the common people."[212]

During the meeting there was widespread opposition to any revival of the BTC. Daniel, nonetheless, insisted that a new council be formed. A compromise body of four, made up of Wabararo and Mmamorepo of Ntsweng and Jacoba and Lesele from Borakalalo, was agreed to, but in the end it pleased no one.[213]

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209. Sebele's marriage to Susan in 1928 is confirmed by a wealth of documentary as well as oral evidence. He also remained legalled married, though usully seperated, from Tlhalefang.

210. BNA S 300/8 "Judicial Enquiry: Bechuanaland Protectorate Succession to Chieftainship- BaKwena Tribe," Feb. 22, & 25-26, 1963.

211. BNA 23/6/2 Minutes of inquiry, June 21-22, 1928.

212. BNA S 23/6/2 RC to HC, June 26, 1928.

213. Despite the creation of this new BTC the old one was never formally abolished leaving Kebohula and Moiteelasilo's positions intact but in limbo.

The first, and arguably only, major initiative by the new councillors was there assumption, with British backing, of control over the "tribal monies," that is the annual rents payed by the traders, blacksmiths, and BSAC, previously collected by the Kgosi.[214] Unfortunately for the councillors Sebele had already either pocketed or barrowed against these receipts for 1928 prior to the BTC's action. Unable at the time to touch any part of the Hut Tax commission or the eduction levy, the councillors soon found themselves reduced to begging both the British and BaKwena for money to pay the salaries they had allocated themselves.

The Council was further undermined by the character of its membership. Waboraro, in particular, became a source of constant scandal and embarrasment.[215] Jakoba's long exile, if nothing else, made him the subject of popular suspicion. Mmamorepo seems to have taken less than full interest in his position, while Lesele was isolated for being pro-Sebele. Within weeks of its inaugeration Stigand, like Ledeboer before him, was describing the new BTC as a "broken reed."[216] Despite such private misgivings, he publicly continued to back the Council.

In December of 1928, Sebele announced that he wished to take six month leave of absence from his duties.[217] He further let it be known that the BTC alone would govern in his place. Stigand, but not all of the Councillors, welcomed this opportunity. As it was the Council accomplished little or nothing during the period, further lowering its credability.

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214. BNA 23/6/2 Minutes of BTC w/ RMol, June 25; and July 26, 1928.

215. Within his first month of office he was charged w/ assault, adultry, failure to properly collect Hut Tax, and failure to pay his own Hut Tax- S 23/6/1-2.

216. BNA S 23/6/1 (also DCMol 5/20/1) RMol to RC, Nov. 8, 1928.

217. BNA S 23/6/1 Sebele II to RMol, Dec. 15, 1928.

Meanwhile, the Kgosi helped organize a *bogwera* at Gabane; a deed that provoked yet another petition against him, which was filed but otherwise ignored in Mafikeng.[218]

Upon his return, Sebele became openly confrontational towards the Council, which finally gained control over the BSAC payment. A focus of conflict was Stigand's removal of Lesele from the Council, on the grounds of ill health. For his part Lesele proved vigorous enough in protesting his expulsion. Out of the resulting bitterness and stalemate another, final, petition against Sebele was forwarded. This time the petitioners wanted power to be entrusted to an expanded Council of eight.[219] In November of 1929 the last, and in some respects most interesting, of the Resident Commissioner's by now semi-annual inquiries was held.[220] Daniel again summed up the meeting:

> "I attended full kgotla meeting at Molepolole on the 18th and 19th of November to discuss the matter and found that there were at least two-thirds of the tribe opposed to the petition. The position was much the same as I found it a year ago, the greater number of headmen were in favour of the petition whilst the mjority consisted of common people and a few headmen."[221]

Although the arguments were similar to earlier inquiries, the minutes of the meeting show a notable departure from previous gatherings in that a number of self-proclaimed commoners spoke out on behalf of the interests of commoners in general. Most of this group denounced the need for any Council but a certain Sephutebakwe called for a new body to be made up exclusively of commoners such as the ones he

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218. BNA S 190/5 Petition w/ 21 names dated May 2, 1929.
219. BNA 23/6/2 Petition w/ 17 names dated Oct. 30, 1929.
220. BNA S 23/6/2 Minutes of inquiry, Nov. 18-19, 1929.
221. BNA S 23/6/2 (also DCMol 5/20/1) RC to HC, Dec. 6, 1929.

understood to exist in Lesotho.[222] Despite the clearly expressed will of the majority, Daniel retained the old BTC with one new member, supposedly for a six month trial period.

The meeting itself, if not its outcome, had been an victory for Sebele and his followers. He waited almost a year before asking, unsuccessfully, for the abolition of the BTC.[223] Unbeknownst to either him or his local adversaries by the time his own overthrow had become inevitable.

Part 4: The Coup

> "One of the principal reasons for pressing for an early removal of Sebele is anxiety on account of the effect which his disgraceful example will have upon his two recently appointed neighbors, Chiefs Bathoen and Molefe."- Earl of Athlone, High Commissioner, 1931.[224]

> "Collaboraton with Tshekedi appears to have had a bad effect upon him <Sebele> and no attempt is made now to listen to government instructions."- Howard Neale, magistrate, 1931.[225]

Sebele's final fall became only a matter of time following the arrival of Daniel's replacement, Charles Ferdinand Rey. Rey was possibly the most dynamic and controversial of the Protectorate's proconsuls. Throughout his tenure, 1930-37, he showed ruthless determination in pursuing his vision for the development of a "bountiful Bechuanaland." Even before he had officially assumed office he had begun to

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222. The BaKwena had been told about the commoners choosing councils in Lesotho by a MoSotho ex-B.P. Police trooper named Hashe, who was probably referring to the Lekgotla la Bafo movement headed by another ex- B.P. Police trooper, Josial Lefela- see Robert Edger (edit.) *Prophets with Honour, A Documentary History of Lekhotla la Bafo*, (Raven Press, Johannesburg 1987.)

223. BNA S 172/15 Sebele II to RC, Oct. 24, 1930.

224. BNA S 122/10 (tel) HC to SS, Jan. 13, 1931.

225. BNA S 210/7 RMol to RC, April 4, 1931.

consider Sebele's deposition.[226] By August of 1930, ten months before it was finally implemented, the removal of the Kgosi had become a matter of active pursuit.

While the fact that Stigand was appointed as his Assistant Resident Commissioner may had an influence on the course of events, Rey's decision that Sebele would have to go was an almost pre-ordained product of the policy guidlines and personal prejudices he brought with him to Mafikeng. He knew he had been commissioned by Leopold Amery, the Colonial and Dominions Secretary, to straighten out his predecessors' perceived legacy of stagnation.[227] Amery had observed this legacy during his 1927 visit to the High Commission territories. Believing that their future trasfer to South Africa was inevitable, he, in the interim, hoped to see them developed as "centers of progress" with a British character, so that they could serve as a counterwieght to Afrikanderdom within the Union. His concerns in this respect came in the context of the 1924 election of J.B. Hertzog's Nationalist dominated Pact government, which, once in power, aggressively pushed for incorporation.[228] Before his departure Rey was told by Amery that the object of past B.P. administrators had been "to keep out of the Union, and to keep the natives quiet and

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226. Rey Diary, Feb. 17-21, first meeting w/ Sebele Feb 19: "Sebele is an elderly man, a drunken dissolute ruffian, whom we had to put under a sort of Regency Council lately- he now shows signs of trying to reform, but is hopelessly corrupt- I suspect that I shall have to depose him before to long. However he and his headmen were immensely civil, and received my speech with great (apparent) enthusiasm." NB. Sebele was 38 at the time.

227. See Prologue by Neil Parsons in Crowder & Parsons (edit.) *Monarch of All I Survey* (published Bechuanaland Diarys of Rey, 1929-37)(Lilian Barber- New York, James Curry- London, The Botswana Society- Gaborone) pp. xvii-xxii.

228. BPP Cmd.8707: *Basutoland, The Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland, History of Discussions with the Union of South Africa, 1909-1939* (HMSO, London 1952.)

happy." To the diKgosi, Rey was quickly seen as standing for just the opposite.

In accordance with Amery's belief that the Protectorate had suffered under a "very unprogressive form of indirect rule," Rey arrived with instructions to bring about a statuatory redefinition of Chiefly authority. From the beginning Rey, himself, concluded that the "practically unfettered powers of chief's and the lamentable misdirection of native courts" were the key factor in the absence of progress: "the interests of 200,000 natives in this territory have been sacrificed for the sake of preserving the personal interests and privaleges of a half-a-dozen chiefs, not one of whom is at present fit to be a chief."[229] This belief resulted in a series of conflicts between the Resident Commissioner and the diKgosi, which culminated in Bathoen II and Tshekedi's legal challenge to the implementation of Rey's Native Administration and Justice Proclamations of 1934. These proclamations were designed to make the diKgosi fully subordinate to British, and potentially South African, authority. The legalized abduction and detention of Sebele was an opening act in this broader conflict. As the Resident Commissioner, himself, noted:

> "We have to frame rules for the powers of the Chiefs and the jurisdiction of their courts according to the Secretary of State's instructions for all the territory. To do so for the Bakwena as long as Sebele is Chief would be a grotesque farce."[230]

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229. BNA 353/13 Rey: "Secret Memorandum," March 1931, p. 3.

230. BNA S 122/10 "Report by the Resident Commissioner on Chief Sebele II of the Bakwena tribe," Aug. 1, 1930. See also S 49/7 "Practice in Native Courts, 1925-29," for past criticisms of Sebele by Stigand.

After reviewing Sebele's dossier, considerably thickened by five year's of Stigand's pen, Rey had concluded that it was an outrage that the Kgosi had been allowed to frustrate the better wishs of Mafikeng for so long. Also disturbing to him was Sebele's alleged bad influence on Bathoen II and, it was feared, the newly appointed Molefi, while Tshekedi's own supposed influence over the MoKwena was a cause of additional concern. Thus Rey apparently hoped that by deposing Sebele he would not only rid himself of one nuisence, but would also send a strong message to the other diKgosi. Having made his decision, the major task became how to gain the aquiescence of his superiors and the BaKwena. Neither task was easy.

From the beginning, Rey and his two principal co-conspirators, Stigand and Neale, who had once more become the magistrate at Molepolole, ruled out any further reliance on local opposition to bring about Sebele's downfall. On the other hand they did want the BaKwena to ultimately legitimize their designs. Returning to Ellenberger's thought in the aftermath of the 1926 crisis, they reached the conclusion that if they could remove the Kgosi first there would be an acceptence of their chosen successor. As Neale put it "Natives are to a great extent fatalists."[231] The designated substitute was Sebele's estranged brother Kgari, a protege of Moiteelasilo. Earlier Stigand had secured for him a government bursary on the basis that: "The applicant is the only brother of Sebele who has impressed me as being a promising and steady young man and one who in the future has the makings of a good chief."[232] By picking Kgari they were rejecting his elder brother Mosarwa who was next in the line of succession (but who during Daniel's 1929 inquiry had backed Sebele.) As it was Mosarwa was conveniently working outside the country

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231. BNA S 122/10 RMol to RC, Aug. 25, 1930.
232. BNA DCMol 5/21 RMol to RC, April 20, 1929.

when they hatched their plan, they would subsequently try to bribe him to stay away.[233]

In October of 1930 the Resident Commissioner asked for and received the High Commissioner's approval to banish the BaKwena Chief.[234] But he suffered a setback the following December when the new Domions Secretary, James Thomas, noting the support Sebele had received during the last inquiry and his own perception of a lack of urgency, expressed his reservations about the proposal and postponed any action until after the arrival of the new High Commissioner.[235] Not to be so easily defeated Rey urged Neale to keep looking for a suitable moment.[236]

Rey did not have to wait long to get what he wanted. Early in 1931 another *bogwera* was held. Although his investigations uncovered only one case of assault on a school teacher and another allegation that a tax collector had been coerced into joining the initiation, Neale reported that: "It is quite evident that Sebele, with whom is associated Moiteelasilo, has deliberately sanctioned and supported an organized attempt to overthrow the influence of Christianized natives. Special attention is being given to those who attend schools and the various Christian denominations."[237] The Resident Commissioner made liberal use of his own gift for hyperbole in drawing up an account, which he forwarded to London, of the dangers posed by this "new" development.[238] On May 7, 1931 the Dominions Secretary finally approved the order to banish Sebele under the provisions of the B.P.'s Proclamaton

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233. BNA DCMol 2/8 "Mosarwa, elder brother of Kgari Sechele, 1931-33."
234. BNA S 122/10 RC to HC, Oct. 7, 1930; HC to Dominions Sec., Oct. 22, 1930.
235. BNA S 122/10 Dominions Sec. to HC, Dec. 12, 1930.
236. BNA S 122/10 RC to RMol, Dec. 29, 1930.
237. BNA S 210/7 RMol to RC, March 30, 1931.
238. BNA S 225/1 RC w/ARC to HC, April 22, 1931.

#15 of 1907, the "Expulsion Law" that his father and grandfather had lobbied so vigorously against.[239] London, however, vetoed Rey's (typically excessive) scheme to abduct Sebele by use of an airplane, so he decided to send the Kgosi a one way rail ticket to Ghanzi via Mafikeng.

Sebele was in bed recuperating from illness when he received a message that he, along with his councillors, was urgently needed at Mafikeng to attend a sudden meeting with the other diKgosi about water developments.[240] By the time he arrived at the Imperial Reserve he knew he had been trapped. In Rey's office he was informed that he had been "relieved of his functions" as Chief and was to be confined to Ghanzi. He was further informed that he was subject to arrest should he try to remain in the Union. Shadowed constantly by South African and Protectorate police, to prevent any escape attempt, Sebele spent the next ten days consulting with his attorney, Mr. Kieser, and a stream of wellwishers, including Isang and Simon Ratshosa. Before the lawyer could file a motion on his behalf, he and his two wives, Tlhalefang and Susan, as well as Senwelo (whom he never married), were taken to the Mafikeng train station. A large crowd gathered to witness their departure. The train crossed the northern Cape Province into Namibia stopping at Gobabis. From there, where another crowd including a brass band greeted their arrival, they were trucked to Ghanzi.

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239. BNA S 225/1-2

240. BNA 225/3 "Removal of Sebele II" including Sebeles account of his removal enclosed in Sebele to HC, Dec. 3, 1932. Bamangwato TA 20/1-2 also contains various correspondence between Tshekedi, Bathoen, Sebele, and others on the matter, 1931-33. Also M. Seboni, chapter 7.

THE AFTERMATH

> "I want to let you know that I have already left, even though I do not like it. I just had to follow the Whitemen's orders. But I want you to be aware that this does not just effect me, but you all as well, all of the *Magosi* (plr. of *bogosi*) of the Northern and Southern Protectorte, and the Union. Help! Help! Help! Our land and nation is going."- Sebele II to Tshekedi, 1931[1]

> "I found <in the Bechuanaland Protectorate> among the more intelligent men an unexpected interest in the course of English political history- in the passage of power from the Crown to the aristocracy, from the aristocracy to the bourgeoise, from the bourgeoise to the proletariat; and they were frankly speculating about the possibility of tribal development following comparable lines."- Leonard Barnes, 1932[2]

The Banishment of Sebele was an important turning point in the history of Botswana as a nation, as well as the BaKwena as a *morafe*. Some of its effects, such as the polarization of relations between most of the Protectorate diKgosi and Rey's administration were immediate. Other implications were only gradually realized. Although monarchical rule, as opposed to Chieftainship, ceased to function in Kweneng from the moment Sebele left Rey's office, for many years thereafter the majority of the BaKwena hoped, in vain, that it could be restored through his, or later his son's, return to Kgosing. Outside of the Reserve, Sebele's removal had the effect of encouraging Bathoen and Tshekedi in their successful opposition to Rey's Native Administration Proclamations. For the British and BaTswana events in Molepolole were seen as a possible model for developments elsewhere. Although during the 1930s their respective hopes

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1. BNA Bamangwato TA 20/1 "Your elder brother, Sebele" to "The Acting Chief Tshekedi Khama," June 10th, 1931. Written at Mafikeng on the day of his departure.
2. Barnes, p. 170.

and fears in this regard went unrealized, in the long run the overthrow of the Protectorate's senior dynasty proved to be precursor for the ultimate otherthrow of *bogosi* throughout the territory.

A great silence is said to have descended over Molepolole as the BaKwena learned that their *bogosi* had been stolen. People were initially too shocked, confused, and, above all, leaderless, to act effectively upon their anger. As Sebele had once told Stigand: "The head belongs to the Chief- Tlogo ke ea Kgosi."[3] But, whereas Motswasele II's enemies had decapitated a monarch, Rey's men were after the monarchy itself. They believed that they could transform the Kweneng into their ideal of a properly subordinated Native Administration. The BaKwena, however, showed themselves to be no fatalists. While B.P. officials publicly maintained that Sebele's detention reflected the will of his people, they privately reported a cycle of mounting resistance and repression. During this "time of troubles," that is the 1930s, the stunned silence gave way to sullen reticence.

The first, meteoric, challenge to Sebele's removal was instigated by the women of Ntsweng. As word spread of their Kgosi's fate, it was officially reported that "a large number of woman <began> crying and inciting people to resist any removal of Sebele's effects."[4] When the Councillors, accompanied by some twenty police, tried to force their way into the royal compound they were driven away with stones. At Kgosing efforts were then begun to take up a collection for Sebele. The Tribal Secretary, Motsumi, was also sent to try to establish contact with the Kgosi, but he was subsequently

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3. BNA DCMol 4/16 Sebele II to RMol, April 7, 1926.
4. BNA 225/3 RMol to ARC, June 6, 1931. Also S 225/4 RC to HC, June 13, 1931. Rey's Diary entry for June 7, 1931.

detained at Lobatse.[5] Although the authority of Kebohula, whom Rey had appointed as acting Chief, and the Tribal Council had collapsed, the Resident Commissioner dismissed the fears of his subordinates and decided to proceed with his planned visit to Molepolole. Indeed he was now more than ever determined to quickly implement Kgari's installation as "acting Chief."[6]

Rey's steadfastness was rewarded. Upon his arrival at Molepolole, on June 10th, he encountered relatively little opposition. The next day he convened a meeting at the government's Camp with twenty-five police, a few other officials, and his wife (in whose handbag was concealed a loaded revolver), along with a crowd of some two thousand BaKwena men, including people from Ntsweng.[7] Forbidden to mention Sebele's name, the majority of the crowd remained silent during most of the proceedings while a handful of collaborators, led by Kebohula, nominated Kgari to act in his brother's absence. With the older Mosarwa absent and Kgari's senior nephew, Bonewamang, the son of the late Padi, being only five, there was little opposition to his appointment, although some controversy exists as to whether the majority of the meeting stood up in Kgari's favor, as Rey subsequently maintained, or to express their opposition to the proceedings.

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5. BNA 225/3 telegrams between RC, ARC, and RM Lobatse, June 8, 1931. Motsumi was held at Lobatse until Sebele had left Mafikeng and thereafter deported.

6. This was the term used throughout June-July of 1931 by the B.P. administration, which was quite cognizant of the fact that legally Sebele had not been deposed but "relieved of his functions" as Chief- BNA S 225/4. S 232/13. DCMol 7/19. The disturbences, along with Sebele's attempts to get a court hearing, were also a factor in Sebele's slightly earlier than planned departure for Ghanzi (without his personal effects.)

7. BNA S 225/4, RC to HC, June 13, 1931. Also S 225/5. Rey Diary entry for June 11, 1931. Bamangwato TA 20/2 Bathoen to Tshekedi, July 17, 1931. On this occasion as well as Kgari's subsequent enthronement no minutes seem to have been taken. Many informants also remember Kgosimang's call.

The only real drama during the meeting was when Kgosimang, to loud cheers, called out for Sebele's return. But Rey appears to have had little trouble restoring order. The following day he even visited Ntsweng and, by his own account, managed to placate the crowd that met him by telling them that they would not be forced to remove to Borakalalo.[8]

Rey's triumph was both real and illusory. In August 1931, the Dominion's Secretary wrote to congratulate the Resident Commissioner and his staff for a job well done.[9] But, as Titus Mbuya has previously shown, the BaKwena still regarded Sebele as there Kgosi.[10] When Kgari refused to discuss his brother's return at the Kgotla, he quickly lost his hold over the people. For the next eight years it was clear to the British that their Chief's authority was being ignored and increasingly dispised by the majority of the *morafe*:

> 1932: "Sebele will always be their real Chief. To the great majority of these people, imbued as they are with traditional superstition, the Chief means a good deal more than a mere individual."[11]
>
> 1933: "The Headmen also say that Kgari is now looked upon as a Government employee. It has been noticable of late that he will not come to the Office at the end of the month for his pay, he always waits a few days."[12]
>
> 1935: "Kgari is neither strong nor intelligent enough to cope....In other words this is now a government controlled tribe."[13]
>
> 1936: "Acceptance of the Native Tribunals Proclamation is Fait Accompli although all but the

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8. Rey's Diary, June 12, 1931, unfortunately I do not have any other accounts of this episode.
9. BNA S 225/4 Dominion's Secretary to HC, Aug. 10, 1931.
10. Titus Mbuya, "Legitimacy and Sucession."
11. BNA DCMol 4/5 RMol to GS, Dec. 28, 1932.
12. BNA S 313/11 ARMol to RM Gaberones, Aug, 22, 1933.
13. BNA S 433/9 Act.ARM to ARC, June 1, 1935.

> chief are suspicious. Kgari is not chief in his own right which is why he accepted."[14]
>
> 1938: "The Chief is not popular. Ninety percent of the Bakwena would welcome the return of his brother Sebele from Ghanzi."[15]
>
> 1939: "He <ie. Kgari> has no personal prestige and very little authority. His tribe do not regard him as the rightful Chief but knowing he has the backing of the Government they do not openly defy him. They show their lack of respect by passive resistence eg. by failing to satisfy his judgements."[16]

To the outside world, the situation was presented somewhat differently from what was recorded in the confidential reports. For example, in 1935, the same year that the Molepolole magistrate was so frank about the nature of his "fait accompli," a circular from Rey's office spoke enthusiasticly about Kgari's "experiment" of paying the members of his Senior Tribunal.[17] Given the perception "that the BaKwena, the Senior Tribe in the territory, have almost more than any other been wedded to native custom," this step was put forward as not only evidence of local progress, "since the removal of Sebele II," but as a model reform for the other reserves.

As early as June of 1931 a "BoSebele" movement, calling for the Kgosi's restoration, began to take shape. While he was still in Mafikeng Sebele is said to have sent his subjects the

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14. BNA S 448/14 Annual Report 1935. Also S 433/9 Act.ADC to ARC, April 1, 1936.

15. BNA S 119/1/1 DC handing over notes, Aug. 16, 1938. Also S 433/9 DC Report, Feb. 12, 1938: "Chief Kgari has a difficult task as he is not, in the eyes of the people, the rightful Chief. His brother Sebele, who was exiled to Ghanzi is still looked upon by the majority of the people as the Chief."

16. BNA S 433/9 DC Report, March 24, 1939.

17. BNA S 359/7 GS, circular, Oct. 3, 1935. See also S 421/5 "Native Proclamations 74 and 75, 1934, Progress made re-Bakwena Reserve." DCMol 3/7 "Bakwena Tribunals."

message *"Retlasetswe!"*, "we have been attacked/invaded," which thereafter became a rallying cry of his supporters. The *mophato* formed that year, whose *bogwera* had been the pretext of the British intervention, was thus graduated as the MaTlhaselwa.[18] From the beginning the BoSebele party was made up of two mutually cooperative groupings, an internal faction centered at Ntsweng and an external faction made up of laborers at Johnnesburg.[19] Both halves pursued a comman strategy based upon the drawing up of petitions and raising money for a possible legal challenge. Among those in Johannesburg such fundraising was accompanied by a refusal to pay Hut Tax.[20] From the beginning the movement also had Bathoen II as an important ally. At his prompting Tshekedi and, to lesser extent, the other Protectorate diKgosi became involved in joint efforts on the behalf of their banished colleague.[21] All of these parties appear to have initially been called to action by Sebele, himself, who thereafter struggled to maintain contact with them, while pressing his own appeals.[22]

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18. The *bogwera* issue was also used to legitimize the action in the regional press- *Rhodesia Herald*, June 27, 1931.

19. On Jo'burg grouping: Interviews w/ Opello Kgabo, Aug. 20; Segwato Mokgadi, Sept. 9, 1985; Susan Sechele, March 31, 1986. Also various BNA documents on the petitions.

20. BNA S 225/10 ARC to HC, Sept. 6, 1932.

21. BNA Bamangwato TA 20/2 Bathoen to Tshekedi, June 5; June 12; July 10, July 17; Aug. 3; Aug. 7; Aug. 11; and Aug. 15, 1931. Tshekedi to Bathoen, June 13, July 21, July 23; Aug. 6; Sept. 15 1931. Kebohula to Bathoen, June 26; Molefi Pilane to Bathoen, July 4; Seboko to Bathoen, Aug. 3; and Matlala Gaborone to Bathoen, Aug. 5, 1931. Martinus Seboni to Tshekedi, July 17, 1931. Isang Papers: Isang to GS, Sept. 22, 1931, (informing the British that his nephew Molefi and the other diKgosi were meeting at Kanye to discuss Sebele's fate.) Also DC Serowe 16/25.

22. Surviving correspondence by Sebele: BNA S 225/6. S 225/3 Sebele to HC, Dec. 3, 1932. Bamangwato TA 20/2 Sebele to Tshekedi June 10; July 18; Aug. 21, 1931; Sebele to Bathoen; and Tshekedi, July 18, 1931. Interview w/ Susan Sechele, June 9, 1985.

The initial protests of Bathoen and Tshekedi and the emergence of the BoSebele agitation within Kweneng convinced Rey that Kgari should be quickly enthroned as a full Chief.[23] This move was justified on the alleged intent of the BaKwena who had agreed to Kgari's appointment in an acting capacity, and the fact that Sebele had never been confirmed by London. Thus on September 1, 1931 before Rey and a reported three thousand other onlookers, Kebohula placed a leopard skin on Kgari's shoulders in ceremony designed to signify his assumption of *bogosi*.[24] In a misconceived effort to bolster Kgari's wavering authority further, the British decided to raid the BaKwena Tribal Fund in order to build Kgari a new house between the two rival sub-villges of Molepolole. It was thus hoped that by so locating the building members of the fractured *morafe* would move toward it thus bringing the village together.[25] Neale wrote "until the whole scheme is complete we cannot consider that the Bakwena troubles have been satisfactorily dealt with."[26] For several years thereafter

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23. BNA S 238/11 (also Bamangwato TA 20/1, including correspondence and earlier petitions drafts) Bathoen & Tshekedi to HC, Aug. 15/18, 1931 (Drafted by Bathoen w/Tshekedi's input.) S 232/13 RMol to RC, July 8, 1931. S 225/4 RC to HC, July 14; and Bathoen to RM Kanye, June 18, 1931. DC Mol 2/5 RC to RMol, Aug. 14, 1931; also minutes on Martinus Seboni to RMol, June 19, 1931: who urged that Kgari act merely as a regent to his nephew, Bonewamang, who at the time was next in line Sebele (see appendix "Whither BaKwena Bogosi?.")

24. BNA S 225/7 RC to HC, Sept. 19, 1931. Rey's Diary for September 1, 1931. Also testimony in S 300/8 "Judicial Enquiry: Bechuanaland Protectorate Succession- Bakwena Tribe" (1963.) Interview w/ Sampson Gower, Aug. 28, 1985.

25. DCMol 2/5 and S 260/13 on "Kgari Sechele's House and Waterboring." The site they chose lacked water leading to the expenditure of much time and money in futile drilling, which indebted the Tribal Fund. The situation was aggravated by Kgari's inability to mobalize labor to keep the boring machine supplied with wood.

26. BNA S 260/13 (also DCMol 2/5) RMol to ARC, Jan. 13, 1932. Further material in S 230/10. S 260/14 & 260/15/1-2. S 397/6. S 399/3. S 410/8-11.

the Chief's only neighbors were his tax collector, Martinus Seboni, and the tribal police.

While Kgari worried about installing his verandah, the BoSebele were actively appealing "that the British Traditions of Fairplay and Justice be observed."[27] Their efforts culminated in the "Great Petition" of March 6, 1933, a document which contained 1,407 signtures representing most of Molepolole's family heads. The size of this petition, along with another one containing 516 signatures, which had been submitted the previous year, was unprecedented.[28] In contrast, the petitions that had been filed against Sebele in the past had never included more than 25 names. Both documents, which were legally drafted, denied the legitimacy of Sebele's removal, or Kgari's "election," and called for their Kgosi to be either returned or tried in a court of law. The appearence of the petitions had been facilitated by the continuing support of Bathoen and Tshekedi, who also managed to get the question of Sebele's detention brought before the House of Commons.[29] But efforts to raise the issue at the Native Advisory Council were frustrated.[30] Locally the BoSebele also scored a symbolic victory by holding up renegotation of the BSAC concession until Sebele was consulted.[31]

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27. S 225/3 "Great Petition," March 6, 1933, w/ cover letter by Kgwanyakgwanyang. Extensive follow up in S 225/11 & S 225/13. Also DCMol 4/5 "Petition for the return of Sebele." S 238/11. Interview w/ S.G. Masimega, July 25, 1985.

28. BNA S 223/3 Bathoen, Tshekedi, and 516 "Names of Headmen," including Sebele's brothers Kgonyakgonyang and Letlamma Sechele, to HC, Oct. 10, 1932. S 225/10 AGS to RM Gaberones, Aug. 3, 1932 on petition w/32 names. S 225/11 "Minutes of Meeting held at Chief's Kgotla," Sept. 12, 1932, (on petition.) S 238/11. Bmangwato TA 20/1.

29. BNA Bamangwato TA 20/1 Tshekedi to Charles Buxton, MP, (n.d.). *House of Commons, Debates*, 5th series, vol. 280 (1933) pp. 2293-94, July 25, 1933.

30. BNA 225/13 Act.ARMol to GS, June 22, 1933.

31. BNA S 225/13, RMol to GS, June 28, 1933. S 290/16-20.

Having commited themselves at Kgari's enthronement, Protectorate officials felt obliged to uphold his authority, despite their own increasing misgivings about his character: "As far as I can see his principal hobbies are motor cars and cogitating as to how he can increase his income with the least trouble to himself; if he ever gave a thought to tribal interests it must have been a long time ago and he has solved the problem of how to rule a tribe, to his complete satisfaction, by doing nothing."[32] What such judgements generally failed to appreciate was that without local legitimacy there was little that Kgari could accomplish. *Bogosi*, when not dependent on the coercive powers of the colonial state, ultimately had to function according to a moral consensus, within the Kgotla. During the early years of Kgari's reign the junior kgotla, for the most part, simply disregarded Kgosing's role as the ultimate arbiter of their disputes.

For their part, the British ignored the Great Petition and encouraged their Chief to take a firm stand against his opponents. Leading BoSebele were threatened and fined. Some teachers lost their jobs.[33] As repression grew others who were not directly part of the movement also suffered. At Gabane, Kgari's deposition of the local ruler, Sebele's friend Masokwane, began a cycle of strife that was to last for decades.[34] While in the Kweneng-Kgalagadi the Chief's implementation of Rey's Native Administration and Justice

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32. BNA S 421/5 RM Gaberones to RC, May 21, 1935. In 1936 the government quashed a charge of attempted rape against him- S 460/6. DCMol 3/3.

33. BNA S 397/6 (also DCMol 4/5) ActGS to RMol, June 27; and RM Gaberones to GS, July 1, 1933.

34. BNA S 282/6. S 295/9. Also S 382/5. S 461/5. S 74/12. S 137/3. DCMol 2/6. DCMol 4/8. DCMol 6/12-13. Interviews w/ Mokgothusile Kgabo, Aug. 14; Kgosi Pule, Aug. 29; Kgosi Kobune, Monte Mokgosi, & Tshibidu Masokwane, Sept. 2; 1985

proclamations resulted in the BaKgalagadi communities being placed under generally unpopular BaKwena overseers.[35]

Political persecution reached a crescendo in 1937. In that year nine members of the Church of God, an independent pentacostal movement, were given prison sentences of two months each with hard labor for their refusal to obey Kgari's order to abandon their faith.[36] Others were fined and in some cases imprisoned for attending the first of many underground *bogwera* and *bojale* schools. But the greatest single act of repression inflicted during the sad year was the forced removal of both the Ntsweng and Borakalalo sections of Molepolole to the area around Kgari's house. Beyond being an embarassment the continued isolation of the Chief's residence made it easy to ignore his authority. The colonial government also adopted as an additional goal the residential segregation of races.[37] Past attempts to make the people move through the "persistent application of pacific pressure," however, had failed.[38]

In April the government was finally prepared to undertake stronger measures.[39] Mounted police began carrying out a policy of mass arrests. People were summoned by the

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35. BNA S 410/5. S 442/4. S 160/12. DCMol 6/16. Interview w/ Eyes Reokwaneng, May 6, 1987. Also Mautle; and Moeng.

36. In 1935 five church members had also been imprisoned for six weeks each. BNA 2DCMol/13 Criminal Record Book, 1918-37: Case 8, May 18, 1937. Also S 433/7; DCMol 3/7 (on Church of God.) S 449/2, News release, Dec. 1935, on earlier trial.

37. BNA 260/15/1-2. An alternative proposal put forward by Rey was to remove the bulk of the whites in Molepolole and Kanye to the Molapo Crown Lands- S 352/14.

38. BNA S 260/15/1 DC Gaberones to ARC, April 13, 1936.

39. BNA S 260/15/1-2. 2DCMol/13 cases 1-7, April 1937. S 471/13 (w/ clippings and background on report in *Star* (Johannesburg) and other papers.) Rey's Diary April 17, 1937. Interviews w/ James & Sol Moruamang, Aug. 14; Moipisi Kemreile, Aug. 19, 1985; S.G. Masmega, Jan. 1, 1986; Edwin Arrowsmith, April 3, 1987.

score and fined £ 5 or one month with hard labor each for their refusal to move. After a week, during which some 300 were summoned and 102 convicted, with the result that the jails at Gaberones and Molepolole became filled beyond their capacity, the BaKwena surrendered and began moving.[40] Only Phetogo refused. She remained defiant inside of Sebele's National Office, which has ever since been locally referred to as "MmaKgosi." Today it is the only building that remains standing at Ntsweng. The house of Sechele I, which had been preserved as his monument (and gravesite), was razed along with other buildings. Only the European residents were, partially, compensated for their losses. Many BaKwena have never forgiven either Kgari or the British for the destruction of Ntsweng and old Borakalalo.

The support given by Bathoen and Tshekedi to the BoSebele coincided with their increasingly vigorous resistence to Rey's Native Administration and Justice Proclmations. If the Resident Commissioner thought that he would intimadate the diKgosi by his action against Sebele he badly misjudged their characters. Tshekedi did, in fact, believe that "he would be the next to go."[41] But this assumption only seems to have increased his determination to challenge the Proclamations, which explicitly empowered the colonial government to suspend or depose Chiefs without reference to either local opinion or any form judicial enquiry. He also objected the provisions mandating the delegation of royal authority to appointed Tribal Councils:

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40. Had they held out a little longer it is likely that the British, themselves, would have capitualated, as they were becoming increasingly anxious about the prospect of continued arrests.

41. M. Crowder *The Flogging of Phinehas McIntosh: A Tale of Colonial Folly and Injustice in Bechuanaland, 1933*, (Yale Press, New Haven 1988), p. 96.

> "An administering Council is something which does not agree with the fundemental principal of Native Administration as it introduces a principal in a Native society for anybody to act apart from the head or Chief. In this regard the Bakwena have been quoted time and time again as exceptions to the rule. Some of us do respectively warn those in authority that the Bakwena Council has gone a long way to convince the Natives of the undesirability of an acting Council in the place of an acting Chief....Some day this truth will be impressed upon the administration."[42]

Tshekedi and Bathoen's refusal to implement the Proclamations in their Reserves, and their resulting legal challenge to their validity before the High Court in 1936, thus also called into question legitimacy of Sebele's removal.[43] Although the Judge ruled against the diKgosi, citing the colonial government's "unfettered and unlimited powers" under the Foriegn Jurisdictions Act, the Proclamations were thereafter withdrawn as unworkable. By then Rey's superiors had concluded that his heavy handed approach to the Chiefs, and the consequent turmoil within Kweneng and the other Reserves, had been counter-productive.[44] Under his successor, Charles Arden-Clark, new Proclamations where drawn up, in consultation with the diKgosi, and finally enacted in 1943.[45] At the time, the High Commissioner's Office notified London that:

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42. BNA Admin. of Justice- High Court C/8/725 Tshekedi to HC (Stanly), April 23, 1934.

43. (The late) Michael Crowder's forthcoming biography of Tshekedi Khama should be the definative account of this struggle.

44. For accounts of the effects of Rey's policies in other reserves see Morton and Ramsay, parts 1 & 2.

45. This was the same Arden-Clark who, as the Governor of the Gold Coast a decade later, would show a similar flexibility in allowing Kwame Nkrumah to move from jail to the Prime Minister's Office.

> "There is only one point in which I desire to direct your particular attention and that is the provision in Clause 3 of the Native Administration Proclamation for a judicial enquiry in case of any doubt as to the rightful successor to the Chieftainship. This is novel, and although the proviso is permissive in form Huggard considers that it would curtail to some extent the High Commissioner's present powers. Its insertion is pressed by Tshekedi who was supported by the other African members of the committee which examined the draft. Forsyth Thompson says that the Africans and particularly Tshekedi were insistent on safeguards which would prevent any recurrence of the Sebele incident and similar happenings."[46]

The new administrative climate came too late to be of any personal benefit to Sebele. In Ghanzi he had remained defiant but isolated.[47] He told the British that he had not been banished because he, unlike them, was still in his country. Indeed the white Ghanzi farmers feared the respect accorded to him by the local population. On one occasion, when he was allowed to travel to Maun, Kgosi Moremi graduated a *mophato* in his honor. But by 1938 his longing for Kweneng caused him to offer to abdicate if he could only be allowed to return as an ordinary person. This offer was refused by Kgari, who reportedly stated: "I am afraid that Sebele should return to Molepolole, for he is the real chief, I, Kgari, am a chief's son."[48]

Sebele died on October 2, 1939. His body was brought back and buried at the Ntsweng kraal with the graves of his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. The funeral was

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46. BNA S 363/6/3 HCO to CO, Jan. 14, 1943.

47. Interviews w/ Susan Sechele, June 9; Rre Koloi, Aug. 23 1985; MacSechele, April 4, 1987. BNA S 225/4,8,12,14. DC Ghanzi 2/7,13.

48. Interviews w/ Mokgothusile Kgabo, Aug. 14; James & Sol Morumang, Aug. 14, 1985. In essence confirmed in DCMol 4/5 Act.DCMol to GS, Oct. 20, 1938.

attended by thousands and included people from all over the Protectorate.[49] Some BaKwena, including Phetogo, are said to have refused to believe it was really Sebele's remains in the coffin and continued to pray for his return.[50] Others remembered the words associated with Motswasele II's demise *"BaKwena ba ga se bolaya Kgosi,"* that is "the BaKwena, a people who could kill their Kgosi."

Of course the BaKwena did not kill the Kgosi. He had been deposed by the British. Although the fall of Sebele II was, for the most part, the final outcome of a longterm tensions between BaKwena *bogosi* over the nature of its integration within the colonial state, there was nothing inevitable about the events of 1931. At the time, the royal office was still internally strong and capable of accommodating itself to the external demands. The variation one finds in the historical chronology of the decline of *bogosi* within the districts of Bechuanaland/Botswana suggests the possibility of alternative outcomes. In Ngamiland the last strong monarch was Sekgoma Letsholathebe, who was exiled by the British in 1906, while in neighboring Gammangwato *bogosi* only began to weaken after Seretse's exile in 1950. In Gangwaketse, the only major reserve not to have had one of its diKgosi at some point removed by the colonial state, *bogosi* was clearly intact in 1966, the year of independence. Thereafter it was was tranformed by Bathoen II's post-independence struggle with the central government during which time, as confirmed by the subsequent pattern of

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49. Popular memories of the large size of the funeral confirmed in BNA DCMol 2/25 Annual Report- Molepolole, 1939. Also S 479/1/1-2 on burial expenses. S 300/8. Interview w/ Susan Sechele, June 9, 1985.

50. M. Seboni, chapter 11, paragraph 7. (In fact the body must have been badly decomposed by the time it reached Molepolole.)

electoral politics, he commanded the allegiance of the majority of his subjects.[51]

In the case of Sebele II, as with Sekgoma Letsholathebe, Seretse, and Molifi, of the BaKgatla bagaKgafele, along with various lesser rulers, such as Gobuamang, of the BaKgatla bagaMmanaana, and Nswazwi VIII, of the BaKalanga bakaNswazwi, it proved relatively easy for the colonial government to remove a local ruler but impossible for it to effectively confer his authority on his successors. After his brother's death, Kgari remained as a generally unpopular, modestly corrupt, and mildly authoritarian Chief.[52] Although he was addressed as "Kgosi," he, himself, had no illusions about either his own legitimacy or the fact that *bogosi* within Kweneng was being destroyed. In the aftermath of Seretse Khama's infamous banishment, he firmly rejected Tshekedi and Bathoen's plan for the creation of a Federated African Authority, a proposal designed to unite Botswana under a revived form of royal leadership, with Kgari as Paramount Chief in recognition of BaKwena seniority. He, accompanied by King Sobuza II of Swaziland and young prince Moshoeshoe II of Lesotho, did represent the Protectorate Chiefs at the coronation of Elizabeth II, but the smybolism was hollow. By then the BaKwena were becoming progressively less willing to divorce their local concerns from their broader political affiliations, despite the Chief's pleas to keep Johannesburg out of the Kgotla.[53]

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51. In 1969 Bathoen resigned as Kgosi and became the leader of the National Front, which for the next two decades, until Batheon's retirement, was the leading party in the Southern District. The one constituency in the district that remained solidly for the ruling Democratic Party, Mosopa, is the exception which confirms the continuing importance of royalist politics given that community's historic resistance to the overule of the BaNgwaketse Kgosi and Kgotla.

52. See T. Mbuya & F. Morton "The South" in Morton & Ramsay, pp. 147-60.

Noting the emergence of the new nationalist politics and the revival of public opposition to his rule, Kgari began to think about abdication and exile. Thus, while the Democratic and People's Parties were holding their first public meetings in Molepolole, he was with his friend Sobuza in Swaziland, allegedly looking to buy a farm. There he suddenly died in September 1962. It was the end of an era. Kgari had repeatedly predicted that he would be the last Chief, and it was, perhaps, for this reason that many BaKwena mourned their autocrat's passing.

Postscript: W(h)ither *Bogosi*?

Kgari's death, without an heir, set the stage for a bitter succession dispute, in 1962-63, between rival groups favoring Sebele II's eldest son, Moruakgomo, and his senior nephew, Bonewamang.[54] Moruakgomo's followers, called the "big flock" (*Letsomane letona*) even by their opponents, were clearly in the majority. They included Acting Chief Kenelakgosi, the senior son of Kebohula, and the two surviving sons of Sechele II, the ailing Mosarwa and (Lena's son) Mack Sechele, as well as, according to the then District Commissioner "a vociferous majority of the common people, led by a few influential, articulate and energetic, senior men." This faction simply argued that Sebele had been the rightful Kgosi and that succession should be returned to his house through his son.

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53. By this Kgari did not mean that they should be unconcerned about regional struggles, but rather that local politics should follow local rules. After the Second World War the Chief, with his council, instituted a local levy to help finance Tshekedi's efforts to lobby opposition within the United Nations to South Africa's bid to annex South-West Africa. During the 1950's the BaKwena also extended asylum to a significant number of refugees from apartheid, while Kgari, himself, maintained contact with such figures as Michael Scott about Bechuanland and regional affairs.

54. NB: Sebele only had a daughter, Tsholofelo, with his senior wife Mohumagadi Tlhalefang.

Bonewamang's followers, who were alleged to have included "a preponderance of senior men" as well as Kgari's influential widow, Gagomakwe, supported their candidate by questioning the legitimacy of Sebele's marriage to Susan, MmaMoruakgomo. In 1941 Kgari, when deviding Sebele's estate had declared that MmaMoruakgomo had not been a proper wife but rather one to the late Kgosi's concubines.[55] Testimony at the time, as well as oral evidence subsequently collected by this author and others, however, shows beyond reasonable doubt that Sebele gave *bogadi* for Susan making their marriage unquestionably legitimate according to customary law.[56] Although not cited at any time during the dispute, there also exists additional documentary evidence confirming the customary marriage.[57] Indeed few marriages of the period are better documented.

Three factors seem to have underpinned opposition to Moruakgomo: the fact that he (like Sechele I) had grown up away from the BaKwena, fear that his acceptance might somehow undermine the principle of monogamy within Christian marriage (and thus create a legal precedent for a then ongoing dispute over Kgari's estate) and, probably the overiding factor, the

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55. BNA DCMol 4/14 ADCMol to DC Gaberones, June 7, 1941.

56. Contemporary testimony in: BNA S 300/8, including minutes of the 1963 Judicial Enquiry into the matter conducted by Peter Watkin Williams and (uncatogued BNA) DCMol file on the dispute (author has full photocopy.) Also S 177/1. OP H 176- I/5/2976. In addition to my own interviews, the majority of which make reference to the dispute, one can consult the Historical Texts collected in Kweneng by University of Botswana students, appended to the original copies of their their fourth year History essays (located in the Botswana collection of the University Library), most especially those of Titus Mbuya.

57. BNA S 210/7 RMol to ARC, March 9, 1931. S 225/4 RC to HC, June 13, 1931. S 225/12 ADC Gaberones to GS, Nov. 15, 1939; Minute by Cairnes to Legal Advisor, Nov. 29, 1939; and Legal Advisors response, Nov. 30, 1939. S 225/14 DC Ghanzi (Cairnes) to GS, Oct. 19, 1937; and to Mrs. Susan Sebele II, Oct. 18, 1938. S 238/10 Joyce (DCMol) to Forsyth Thompson, Jan. 9, 1939. DC Ghanzi 2/13, ADC Gaberones to DCMol, Jan. 26, 1940.

fact that his mother was of mixed race. On the latter point one particularly prominent Bonewamang supporter was quoted as saying "one of the reasons for Sebele's expulsion was that he had married a Coloured and our fathers thought it wrong to be ruled by a coloured." For similar reasons some prominent supporters of Bonewamang had earlier been opposed to the installation of Seretse in Gammangwato.[58]

After a number of public meetings and a failed (and biased) intervention attempt by neighboring diKgosi, Moruakgomo was accepted as Kgosi by, according to the District Commissioner, "about 80% of the people," during a public assembly held on November 26, 1962. But the minority protested the decision, filing a complaint over the procedures that had been adopted up until then by Kenelakgosi. Given the polarization that had emerged over the issue, the Protectorate administration felt compelled to hold a Judicial Enquiry into the matter, ironically in accordance with Clause 3 of the 1943 Native Administration Proclamation, which Tshekedi had insisted upon to prevent the recurrence of the colonial abuse of the rule of proper succession which had accompanied Sebele II's removal.

The Judicial Enquiry was conducted by Peter Watkin Williams, the then Chief Justice of the High Court on February 22, 25, and 26, 1963. His verdict, which came as a surprize to nearly everyone, was that succession should pass to Neale Sechele II, although both Moruakgomo and Bonewamang (in that order) were confirmed to be genealogically senior. Watkin Williams' curious conclusion was based on two debatable assumptions. The first was that Kgari's installation as Kgosi rather than regent had been properly carried out. At the time the followers of both Bonewamang and Moruakgomo based their

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58. See correspondence in Tshekedi Khama papers located at the Khama III Memorial Museum, Serowe.

claims on the historic fact that this had not been the case. The second assumption was that succession must always move downwards thus cutting off all of Kgari's seniors (ie. Moruakgomo and his younger brother Mokgalagadi, Bonewamang, and Mosarwa) from the line of succession. A historic contradiction to this dubious conclusion is immediately offered in the example of Sechele I, who after the execution of his father had to overcome a number of junior usurpers.

Watkin-Williams was not aware of the fact that Neale was the bastard son of Baruti, not Sechele II, and Phetogo, nor, apparently that his personal character made him a questionable appointment under any circumstance. Had Sechele II accepted Neale before his death as his son he would have, nonetheless, been entitled to a place in the line of succession after Kgari, but this almost certainly was not the case. Arguably then, if one were to accept the proposition of downward inheritance from Kgari, one could maintain that Mack Sechele, as the undisputed son of a Kgosi, rather than Neale should have been awarded the throne, though Mack, himself, has consistently recognized the claims of Sebele's sons.

Neale served, ineffectively, as Chief from 1963 until 1970, with Mack usually in de facto charge of the administration as his Deputy Chief from 1964 till 1969. In 1970, the Government's displeasure with Neale's "maladministration" led to his forced abdication: he subsequently died without heirs in 1985. Neales deposition should have left two options open- namely either the continued acceptence of the Watkin Williams' decision, in which title to *bogosi* would have logically passed to Mack Sechele, or the overturning of the decision, which would have reopened the claims of both Moruakgomo and Bonewamang. As it was the whole question was sidestepped by the controversial Presidential

appointment of Bonewamang as the African Authority for the District.

Bonewamang's term in office undoubtedly served to restore a sense of dignity to the Bakwena Tribal Administration but unfortunately his leadership was cut short by a fatal auto-accident in 1978. In the wake of the tragedy Mack Sechele was recalled to serve as African Authority on behalf of Bonewamang's young son Kgari, who it was announced would eventually succeed. Shortly thereafter Moruakgomo died without any heir, but is survived by his brother Mokgalagadi, who has sons. In 1986, Mack Sechele resigned as African Authority and was replaced in that office by his eldest son Moitala, amidst continuing controversy.

W(h)ither *Bogosi jwa BaKwena* is ultimately a question that must be answered by the Government and the BaKwena themselves. According to historical practice sucession to *bogosi* by male primogenture with (in cases of polygamy) the sons of senior wives taking precedence over junior ones.[59] In the case of the BaKwena this rule has been repeatedly violated by external forces. If *Bogosi jwa BaKwena* is to survive in any meaningful way it would seem necessary that the various competing claims over who should be Kgosi should at some point be addressed.

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59. Royal wives have in the past been legitimized by *bogadi* and/or Christian ceremony.

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3) Mr. Ngwanaamotho Kgosientso, June 13, 1985, at Molepolole.

4) District Commissioner Marcus Rowland, July 25, 1985, at Molepolole.

5) Mr. Selebatso Masimega, July 25, 1985, (two sessions) at Molepolole.

6) Mr. Kobedi Seribe, Aug. 5, 1985, at Mmankgodi. Also present and assisting, Sam Merementsi.

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15) Mr. July January, Aug. 19, 1985, at Molepolole (Mogopetsane.)

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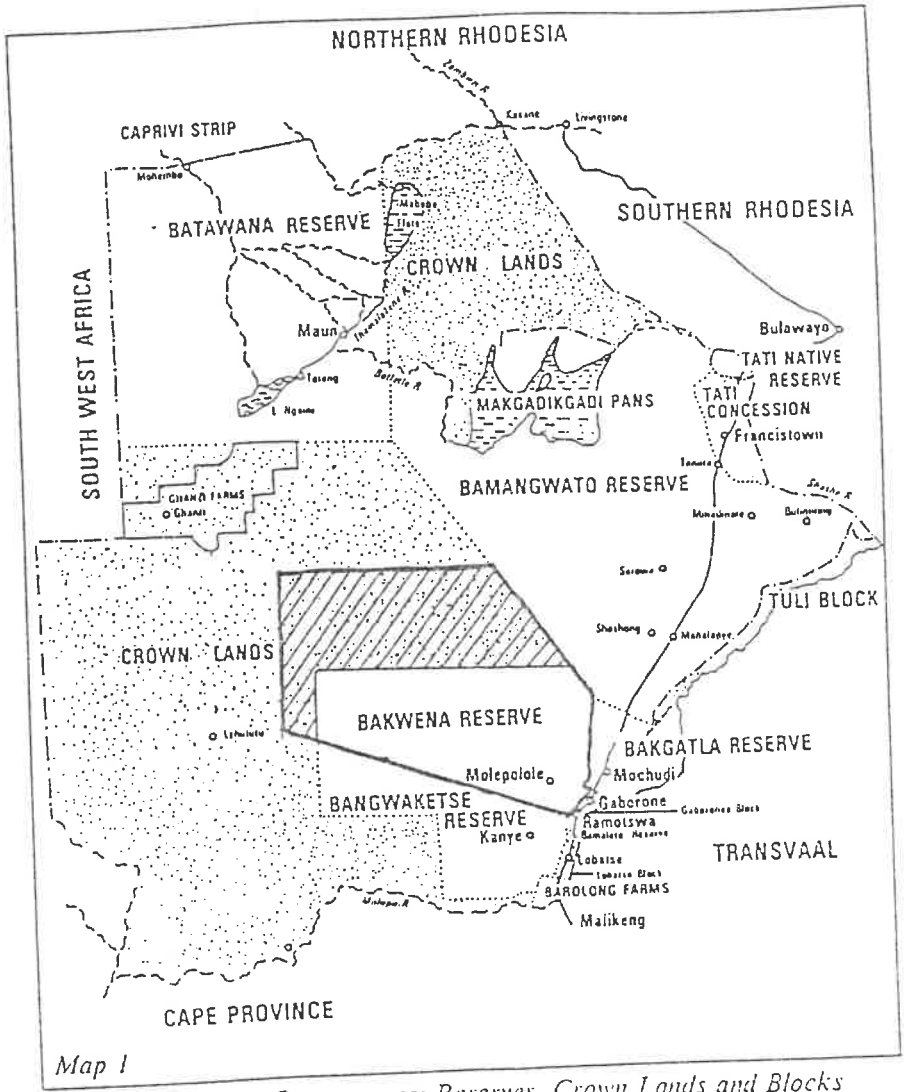
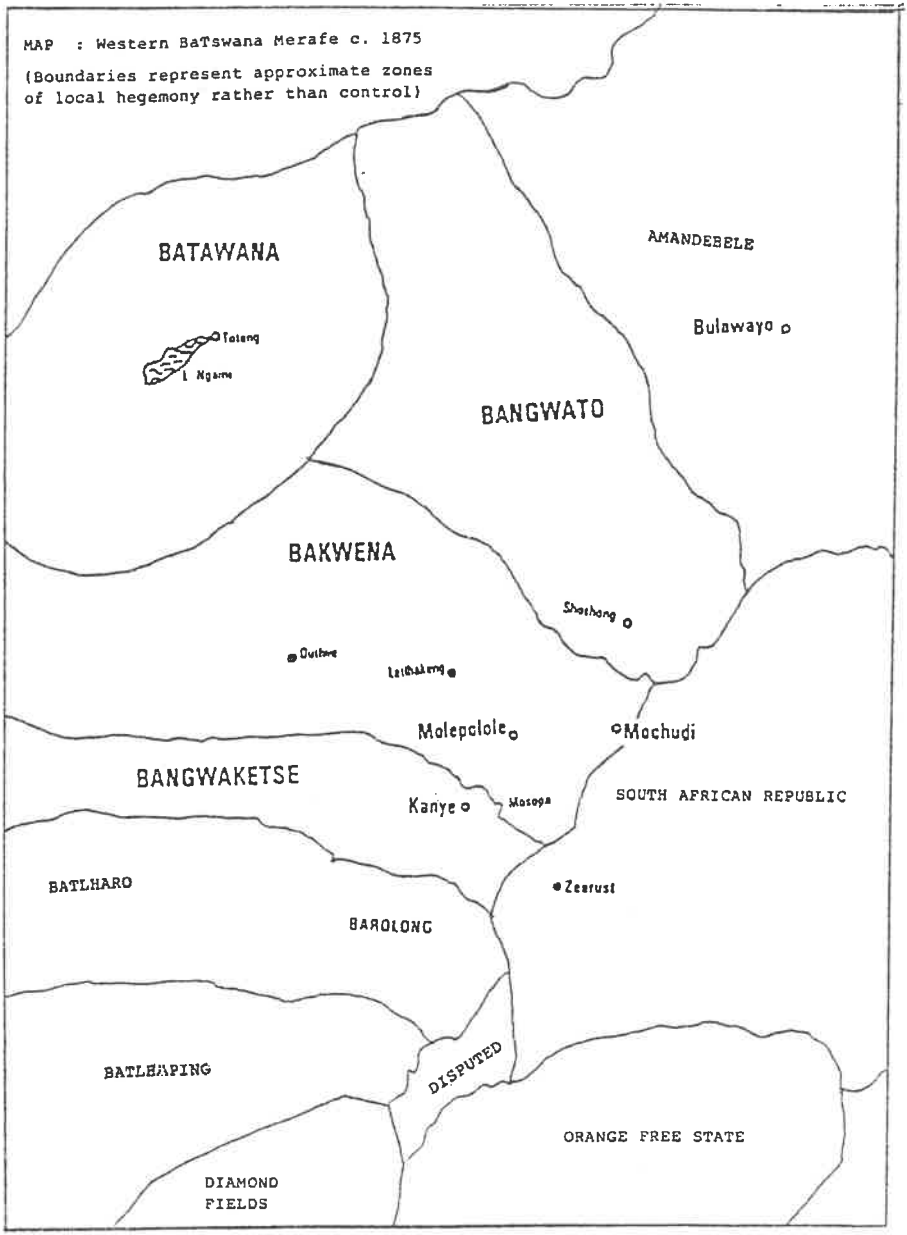


Map 1

The Bechuanaland Protectorate: Reserves, Crown Lands and Blocks

Approximate extent of BaKwena tribute and tax collection in the Crownlands after 1899


MAP : Western BaTswana Merafe c. 1875
(Boundaries represent approximate zones of local hegemony rather than control)
BATAWANA
Tatamq
Ngamo
AMANDEBELE
Bulawayo
BANGWATO
BAKWENA
Shoshong
Molepolole
Mochudi
BANGWAKETSE
Kanye
Mosopa
SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC
Zeerust
BATLHARO
BAROLONG
BATLHAPING
DISPUTED
ORANGE FREE STATE
DIAMOND FIELDS

Map 2

VITA

F. Jeffress Ramsay

Born: 12 November 1958, Baltimore, U.S.A.

EDUCATION:

1982 M.A., African History, Boston University.

1980 B.A., History, University of Pennsylvania.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Teaching:

1989-90 Instructor, Southern African History, Boston University.

1988-90 Teaching Assistant, African History Harvard University.

1988 Instructor, World History, Boston University.

1984,1988 Teaching Fellow, American History, Boston University.

Fieldwork:

1984-87 History of South-East Botswana since 1800. Fulbright-Hays/Social Science Research Council Fellow (dual award) affiliated with the National Institute of Research, University of Botswana.

Offices & Other Appointments:

1984-90 Staff Assistant, African Studies Center, Boston University.

1986-87 Acting Project Director, Sechele I Museum, Molepolole, Botswana.

1986-87 Executive Board Member, Gaborone Television Association, Botswana.

1986 Committee Member, TAICU, Botswana.

1981 Research Assistant, *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Boston University.

1980-81 Executive Board Member, National Collegiate Conference Association (National Model United Nations-U.S.A.)

Memberships:

1988- Mmegi Press Trust.

1987- African Studies Association.

1984- Botswana Society.

PUBLICATIONS

Books:

1989 *Historical Dictionary of Botswana* New Edition, co-author with Fred Morton & Andrew Murray, Scarecrow Press.

1987 *The Birth of Botswana, A History of the Bechuanaland Protectorate from 1910 to 1966* co-editor with Fred Morton, Longman. Also contributed the following chapters: Chapter 2, "The Neo-Traditionalist, Sebele II of the BaKwena;" Chapter 4, "Resistance from Subordinate Groups: BaBirwa of Malema, BaKgatla Mmanaana, and BaKalanga bakaNswazwi;" Chapter 13, "The Formation of Political Parties," with A. Murray and H. Nengwekhula; Chapter 14, "One Botswana, One Nation: The Arrival of Independence," with Sandy Grant.

Articles & Contributions:

1990 "Quett Masire" in the *Encyclopedia of World Biography*

1989 "Some Notes on the Colonial Era History of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve Region" in *Botswana Notes and Records.*

1985 Contributor of country profiles for Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Comoro Islands, Mauritius, Seychelles, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, and Soa Thome & Principe in *Global Studies: Africa* edited by Jane Martin.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

1989 "The Poltics of Education and the Education of Politics in the Bakwena Reserve of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, 1900-18", African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta.

1988 "'A Child that does not cry dies in the cradle': The Batswana campaign to prevent the inclusion of the

Protectorates into the Union of South Africa, 1908-1910", African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Chicago.

1987 "A Brief Survey of Recorded Oral Data Relevant to Botswana's History", African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Denver.

SEMINARS PRESENTATIONS/LECTURES

1990 "Some Aspects of the African-American Relationship with Black South Africa, 1880-1920," Africa Awareness Day Lecture, Boston University.

1989 Co-discussant for seminar "On Popular Culture and the Performing Arts: African Expressionism of the Colonial Experiance, 1910-1940," Boston University.

1989 "Botswana A Model of Development Planning?" Lecture/Discussion, African Student Association- Boston University, fortnightly Spring Seminar.

1987 "Towards a National Historiography for Botswana" Walter Rodney Seminar, Boston University, Boston.

1987 "BaKwena ba ga se Bolaya Bogosi?" Botswana Society Lecture, Gaborone.

1986 "Some Aspects of Kwenengs Past", Paper/Lecture, Molepolole College of Education, Molepolole.

1985 "Better Red Than Dead, Some Observations on the British Occupation of Kweneng, 1885-1895", for University of Botswana seminar commemorating the centenary of the founding of the Bechuanaland Protectorate, Gaborone. 1985)

1985 "All The Kgosi's Men: A Preliminary Look at Aspects of the Reign of Kgosi e Kgolo Sebele II of the Bakwena Prior to the Time of His Exile" University of Botswana Department of History Seminar on Biography, Gaborone.

OTHER

1986- Occassional Contributor on Politics and History to *MMEGI* newspaper in Botswana.

1985 "1885," co-author with Andrew Murray, historical drama about the founding of the Bechuanaland Protectorate performed in public in Botswana during 1985.